Serfojee Rajah 1829

THE DISOWNED.

1044

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM."

"*Corb.*—I disclaim in him!
Avoc. 1*st.*—*But for what cause?*"
Volpone, Act 4, *Scene* 5.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1829.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE DISOWNED.

CHAPTER I.

"Will you hear the letter?"

* * * *

"This is the motley minded gentleman that I have *before* met in the forest."

As You Like it.

A MORNING or two after the conversation with which our last chapter concluded, Clarence received the following letter from the Duke of Haverfield:—

"Your letter, my dear Linden, would have

been answered before, but for an occurrence which is generally supposed to engross the whole attention of the persons concerned in it. Let me see—ay, *three*—yes, I have been *exactly* three days married! Upon my honour, there is much less in the event than one would imagine; and the next time it happens, I will not put myself to such amazing trouble and inconvenience about it. But one buys wisdom only by experience. Now, however, that I have communicated to you the fact, I expect you, in the first place, to excuse my negligence for not writing before; for (as I know you are fond of the *literæ humaniores*, I will give the sentiment the dignity of a quotation)—

"'Un veritable amant ne connoit point d'amis;'*

and though I have been three days married, I am still a lover! In the second place, I expect

* Corneille.

you to be very grateful that, all things considered, I write to you *so soon; pour dire vrai, mon cher*, it would not be an ordinary inducement that could make me 'put pen to paper'—[Is not that the true vulgar, commercial, academical, metaphorical *tournure du style epistolaire?*]—so shortly after the fatal ceremony. So, had I nothing to say but in reply to your comments on state affairs — (hang them!) —or in applause of your Italian friend, of whom I say, as Charles II. said of the honest yeoman—'I can admire virtue, though I can't imitate it!'—I think it highly probable that your letter might still remain in a certain box of tortoiseshell and gold, (formerly belonging to the great Richelieu, and now in my possession,) in which I at this instant descry, 'with many a glance of woe and boding dire,' sundry epistles, in manifold hand-writings, all classed under the one fearful denomination—'unanswered.'

"No, my good Linden, my heart is inditing of a better matter than this. Listen to me, and then stay at your host's, or order your swiftest steed, as seems most meet to you.

"You said rightly that Miss Trevanion, now her Grace of Haverfield, was the intimate friend of Lady Flora Ardenne. I have often talked to her—viz., Eleanor, not Lady Flora—about you, and was renewing the conversation yesterday, when your letter, accidentally lying before me, reminded me of you. Sundry little secrets passed, in due conjugal course, from her possession into mine. I find that you have been believed, by Lady Flora, to have played the perfidious with La Meronville—that she never knew of your application to her father, and his reply—that, on the contrary, she accused you of indifference in going abroad without attempting to obtain an interview, or excuse your supposed infidelity—that her heart

is utterly averse to an union with that odious Lord Boro—Bah—I mean Lord Ulswater; and that—prepare, Linden—she still cherishes your memory, even through time, change, and fancied desertion, with a tenderness which—which—deuce take it, I never could write sentiment—but you understand me; so I will not conclude the phrase. 'Nothing in oratory,' said my cousin D——, who was, *entre nous*, more honest than eloquent, 'like a break!'—*down!* you should have added, said I.

"I now, my dear Linden, leave you to your fate. For my part, though I own Lord Ulswater is a lord whom ladies in love with the etcæteras of married pomp might well desire, yet I do think it would be no difficult matter for you to eclipse him! I cannot, it is true, advise you to run away with Lady Flora. *Gentlemen* don't run away with the daughters of gentlemen, though they do sometimes with their

wives!—(those feats, thank Heaven, are pretty well confined to officers on half pay, mercurial attornies, and descendants of the Irish kings!) —but, without running away, you may win your betrothed and Lord Ulswater's intended. —A distinguished member of the House of Commons, owner of Scarsdale, and representative of the most ancient branch of the Talbots—*mon Dieu!* you might marry a queen dowager, and decline settlements!

"And so, committing thee to the guidance of that winged god, who, if three days afford any experience, has made thy friend forsake pleasure only to find happiness, I bid thee, most gentle Linden, farewell.

"HAVERFIELD."

Upon reading this letter, Clarence felt as a man suddenly transformed! From an exterior of calm and apathy, at the bottom of which lay

one bitter and corroding recollection, he passed at once into a state of emotion, wild, agitated, and confused; yet, *amidst* all, was foremost a burning and intense hope, which for long years, he had not permitted himself to form.

He descended into the breakfast parlour. Mordaunt, whose hours of *appearing*, though not of rising, were much later than Clarence's, was not yet down; and our lover had full leisure to form his plans, before his host made his *entrée*.

"Will you ride to-day?" said Mordaunt: "there are some old ruins in the neighbourhood well worth the trouble of a visit."

"I grieve to say," answered Clarence, "that I must take my leave of you. I have received intelligence, this morning, which may greatly influence my future life, and by which I am obliged to make an excursion to another part of

the country, nearly a day's journey, on horseback, from hence."

Mordaunt looked at his guest, and conjectured by his heightened colour, and an embarrassment which he in vain endeavoured to conceal, that the journey might have some cause for its suddenness and dispatch, which the young senator had his peculiar reasons for concealing. Algernon contented himself, therefore, with expressing his regret at Linden's abrupt departure, without incurring the indiscreet hospitality of pressing a longer sojourn beneath his roof.

Immediately after breakfast, Clarence's horse was brought to the door, and Harrison received orders to wait with the carriage at W——, until his master returned. Not a little surprised, we trow, was the worthy valet at his master's sudden attachment to equestrian excursions. Mordaunt accompanied his visitor through the

park, and took leave of him with a warmth which sensibly touched Clarence, in spite of the absence and excitement of his thoughts; indeed, the unaffected and simple character of Linden, joined to his acute, bold, and cultivated mind, had taken strong hold of Mordaunt's interest and esteem.

It was a mild autumnal morning, but thick clouds in the rear prognosticated rain; and the stillness of the wind, the low flight of the swallows, those volucrine Bruces of the air, and the lowing of the cattle, slowly gathering towards the nearest shelter within their appointed boundaries, confirmed the inauspicious omen. Clarence had passed the town of W——, and was entering into a road singularly hilly, when he "was aware," as the quaint old writers of former days expressed themselves, of a tall stranger, mounted on a neat, well-trimmed, galloway, who had for the last two minutes

been progressing towards a closely parallel line with Clarence, and had, by sundry glances and hems, denoted a desire of commencing acquaintance and conversation with his fellow traveller.

At last he summoned courage, and said, with a respectful, though somewhat free air, "That is a very fine horse of yours, Sir—I have seldom seen so fast a walker: if all his other paces are equally good, he must be quite a treasure."

All men have their vanities. Clarence's was as much in his horse's excellencies as his own; and, gratified even with the compliment of a stranger, he replied to it by joining in the praise, though with a modest and measured forbearance, that the stranger, if gifted with penetration, could easily have discerned was more affected than sincere.

"And yet, Sir," resumed Clarence's new companion, "my little palfrey might perhaps

keep pace with your steed; look—I lay the rein on his neck—and, you see, he rivals—by heaven, he *outwalks* yours."

Not a little piqued and incensed, Linden also relaxed his rein, and urged his horse to a quicker step; but the lesser competitor not only sustained but increased his superiority; and it was only by breaking into a trot that Linden's impatient and spirited steed could overtake him. Hitherto Clarence had not honoured his new companion with more than a rapid and slight glance; but rivalry, even in trifles, begets respect, and our defeated hero now examined him with a more curious eye.

The stranger was between forty and fifty—an age in which, generally, very little of the boy has survived the advance of manhood; yet was there a hearty and frank exhilaration in the manner and look of the person we describe, which is rarely found beyond the first stage of

youth. His features were comely and clearly cut, and his air and appearance indicative of a man who might equally have belonged to the middle or the upper orders.

But Clarence's memory, as well as attention, was employed in his survey of the stranger; and he recognized, in a countenance on which time had passed very lightly, an old and oft-times recalled acquaintance. However, he did not immediately make himself known. "I will first see," thought he, "whether he can remember his young guest in the bronzed stranger, after eight years' absence."

"Well," said Clarence, as he approached the owner of the palfrey, who was laughing with childish glee at his conquest—"well, you have won, Sir; but the tortoise might beat the hare in walking, and I content myself with thinking that at a trot or a gallop the result of a race would have been very different."

"I am not so sure of that, Sir," said the sturdy stranger, patting the arched neck of his little favourite: "if you would like to try either, I should have no objection to venture a trifling wager on the event."

"You are very good," said Clarence, with a smile in which urbanity was a little mingled with contemptuous incredulity; "but I am not now at leisure to win your money: I have a long day's journey before me, and must not tire a faithful servant; yet I do candidly confess that I think" (and Clarence's recollection of the person he addressed made him introduce the quotation), "that my horse—

"'—————Excels a common one
In shape, in courage, colour, *pace*, and bone.'"

"Eh, Sir," cried our stranger, as his eyes sparkled at the verses, "I would own that your horse were worth all the horses in the kingdom, if you brought Will Shakspeare to prove it.

And I am also willing to confess that your steed does fairly merit the splendid praise which follows the lines you have quoted—

> " 'Round hoofed, short jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
> Broad breast, full eyes, small head, and nostril wide,
> High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong,
> Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide.' "

"Come," said Clarence, "your memory has atoned for your horse's victory, and I quite forgive your conquest, in return for your compliment; but suffer me to ask how long you have commenced cavalier. The Arab's *tent* is, if I err not, more a badge of your profession than the Arab's *steed*."

King Cole (for the stranger was no less a person) looked at his companion in surprise! "So, you know me, then, Sir. Well, it is a hard thing for a man to turn honest, when people have so much readier a recollection of his sins than his reform."

"Reform," quoth Clarence, "am I then to understand that your majesty has abdicated your dominions under the green wood tree?"

"You are," said Cole, eying his acquaintance inquisitively; "you are.

"'*I* fear no more the heat of the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
I my worldly task have done,
Home am gone and ta'en my wages.'"

"I congratulate you," said Clarence; "but only in part—for I have often envied your past state, and do not know enough of your present to say whether I should equally envy *that*."

"Why," answered Cole, "after all, we commit a great error in imagining that it is the living wood or the dead wall which makes happiness. 'My *mind* to me a kingdom is'—and it is that which you must envy, if you honour any thing belonging to me with that feeling."

"The precept is both good and old," answer-

ed Clarence, "yet I think it was not a very favourite maxim of yours some years ago. I remember a time when you thought no happiness could exist out of 'dingle and bosky dell.' If not very intrusive on your secrets, may I know how long you have changed your sentiments and manner of life? The reason of the change I dare not presume to ask."

"Certainly," said the quondam gipsy, musingly—"certainly I have seen your face before, and even the tone of your voice strikes me as not wholly unfamiliar—yet I cannot, for the life of me, guess whom I have the honour of addressing. However, Sir, I have no hesitation in answering your questions. It was just five years ago last summer, when I left the Tents of Kedar. I now reside about a mile from hence. It is but a hundred yards off the high road, and if you would not object to step aside and suffer a rasher or aught else, to be 'the shoeing-horn to draw

on a cup of ale,' as our plain forefathers were wont wittily to say, why, I shall be very happy to shew you my habitation. You will have a double welcome, from the circumstance of *my* having been absent from home for the last three days."

Clarence, mindful of his journey, was about to decline the invitation, when a few heavy drops falling, began to fulfil the cloudy promise of the morning. "Trust," said Cole, "one who has been for years a watcher of the signs and menaces of the weather—we shall have a violent shower immediately. You have now no choice but to accompany me home."

"Well," said Clarence, yielding with a good grace, "I am glad of so good an excuse for intruding on your hospitality.

"'O, sky!
Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak!'"

"Bravo," cried the ex-chief, too delighted to find a comrade so well acquainted with Shakspeare's sonnets, to heed the little injustice Clarence had done the sky, in accusing it of a treachery its black clouds had by means deserved. "Bravo, Sir; and *now*, my palfrey against your steed—trot—eh—or gallop?"

"Trot, if it must be so," said Clarence, superciliously; "but I am a few paces before you."

"So much the better," cried the jovial chief. "Little John's mettle will be the more up—on with you, Sir—he who breaks into a canter loses—on!"

And Clarence slightly touching his beautiful steed, the race was begun. At first his horse, which was a remarkable *stepper*, as the modern Messrs. Dickinson and Dyson would say, greatly gained the advantage. "To the right," cried the *ci-devant* gipsy, as Linden had

nearly passed a narrow lane which led to the domain of the ex-king. The turn gave "Little John" an opportunity which he seized to advantage; and, to Clarence's indignant surprise, he beheld Cole now close behind—now beside—and now—now—*before!* In the heat of the moment he put spurs rather too sharply to his horse, and the spirited animal immediately passed his competitor—*but*—in a canter!

"Victoria," cried Cole, keeping back his own steed—"victoria—confess it!"

"Pshaw," said Clarence, petulantly.

"Nay, Sir, never mind it," quoth the retired sovereign; "perhaps it was but a venial transgression of your horse—and on other ground I should not have beat you."

It is very easy to be generous when one is *quite* sure one is the victor. Clarence felt this, and muttering out something about the sharp angle in the road which he had *long* passed,

turned abruptly from all farther comment on the subject, by saying, "We are now, I suppose, entering your territory. Does not this white gate lead to your new (at least new to me) abode?"

"It does," replied Cole, opening the said gate, and pausing as if to suffer his guest and rival to look round and admire.

The house, in full view, was of red brick, small, and square, faced with stone copings, and adorned in the centre with a gable roof, on which was a ball of glittering metal, similar to those at Holyrood. A flight of stone steps led to the porch, which was of fair size and stately, considering the proportions of the mansion—over the door was a stone shield of arms, surmounted by a stag's head; and above this heraldric ornament was a window of great breadth, compared to the other conveniences of a similar nature. On either side of the house ran a slight iron fence, the

protection of sundry plots of gay flowers and garden shrubs, while two peacocks were seen slowly stalking towards the enclosure to seek a shelter from the increasing shower. At the back of the building thick trees and a rising hill gave a meet defence from the winds of winter; and at the front, a sloping and small lawn afforded pasture for a few sheep, and two pet deer. Towards the end of this lawn were two square fishponds, shaded by poplars and the weeping willow. At each of these, as if emblematic of ancient customs, was a common tent; and in the intermediate space was a rustic pleasure-house, fenced from the encroaching cattle, and half hid by surrounding laurel, and the parasite ivy.

All together there was a quiet and old-fashioned comfort, and even luxury, about the place, which suited well with the eccentric character of the abdicated chief; and Clarence, as he gazed

around, really felt that he might, perhaps, deem the last state of the owner *not* worse than the first.

Unmindful of the rain, which now began to pour fast and full, Cole suffered "Little John's" rein to fall over his neck, and the spoiled favourite to pluck the smooth grass beneath, while he pointed out to Clarence the various beauties of his seat.

"There, Sir," said he, "by those ponds in which, I assure you, old Isaac might have fished with delight, I pass many a summer's day. I was always a lover of the angle, and the farthest pool is the most beautiful bathing place imaginable;—as glorious Geoffrey Chaucer says—

"'The gravel's gold; the water pure as glass,
The bankès round the well environing;
And softè as velvet the youngè grass
That thereupon lustily come springing.'

"And in that arbour Lucy—that is, my wife—

sits in the summer evenings with her father and our children; and then—ah! see our pets come to welcome me"—pointing to the deer, who had advanced within a few yards of him, but, intimidated by the stranger, would not venture within reach—"Lucy loved choosing her favourites among animals which had formerly been wild, and faith, I loved it too. But you observe the house, Sir—it was built in the reign of Queen Anne: it belonged to my mother's family, but my father sold it, and his son five years ago re-bought it. Those arms belong to my maternal ancestry. Look—look at the peacocks creeping along—poor pride theirs that can't stand the shower! But, egad, that reminds me of the rain. Come, Sir, let us make for our shelter."

And resuming their progress a minute more brought them to the old-fashioned porch. Cole's ring summoned a man, not decked in "livery gay," but, "clad in serving frock," who took

the horses with a nod, half familiar half respectful, at his master's injunctions of attention and hospitality to the stranger's beast; and then our old acquaintance, striking through a small low hall, ushered Clarence into the chief sitting-room of the mansion.

CHAPTER II.

"We are not poor; although we have
No roofs of cedar, nor our brave
Baiæ, nor keep
Account of such a flock of sheep,
Nor bullocks fed
To lard the shambles; barbles bred
To kiss our hands; nor do we wish
For Pollio's lampries in our dish.

If we can meet and so confer
Both by a shining saltcellar,
And have our roof,
Although not arch'd, yet weather-proof;
And ceiling free
From that cheap candle-bawdery;
We'll eat our bean with that full mirth
As we were lords of all the earth."

HERRICK, *from* HORACE.

ON entering the room, Clarence recognized Lucy, whom eight years had converted into a sleek and portly matron of about thirty-two,

without stealing from her countenance its original expression of mingled modesty and good-nature. She hastened to meet her husband with an eager and joyous air of welcome seldom seen on matrimonial faces after so many years of wedlock. A fine, stout boy, of about eleven years old, left a cross-bow, which, on his father's entrance, he had appeared earnestly employed in mending, to share with his mother the salutations of the Returned. An old man sate in an arm-chair by the fire, gazing on the three with an affectionate and gladdening eye, and playfully detaining a child of about four years old, who was struggling to escape "to dear papa!"

The room was of oak wainscot, and the furniture plain, solid, and strong, and cast in the fashion still frequently found in those country houses which have remained unaltered by innovation since the days of George II.

Three rough-coated dogs, of a breed that would have puzzled a connoisseur, gave themselves the rousing shake, and, deserting the luxurious hearth, came in various welcome to their master. One rubbed itself against his sturdy legs, murmuring soft rejoicings: he was the grandsire of the canine race, and his wick of life burnt low in the socket. Another sprung up almost to the face of his master, and yelled his very heart out with joy: that was the son, exulting in the vigour of matured *doghood!*—and the third scrambled and tumbled over the others, uttering his pæans in a shrill treble, and chiding most snappishly at his two progenitors for interfering with his pretensions to notice: that was the infant dog, the little reveller in puppy childishness! Clarence stood by the door, with his fine countenance smiling benevolently at the happiness he beheld, and

congratulating himself that for one moment the group had forgot that he was a stranger.

As soon as our gipsy friend had kissed his wife, shaken hands with his eldest hope, shaken his head at his youngest, smiled his salutation at the father-in-law, and patted into silence the canine claimants of his favour, he turned to Clarence, and saying, half bashfully, half good-humouredly, "See what a troublesome thing it is to return home, even after three days' absence. Lucy, dearest, welcome a new friend!" he placed a chair by the fireside for his guest, and motioned to him to be seated.

The chief expression of Clarence's open and bold countenance was centred in the eyes and forehead; and as he now doffed his hat, which had hitherto concealed that expression, Lucy and her husband recognized him simultaneously.

"I am sure, Sir," cried the former, "that I am glad to see you once more!"

"Ah! my young guest under the gipsy-awning!" exclaimed the latter, shaking him heartily by the hand: "where were my eyes, that they did not recognize you before?"

"Eight years," answered Clarence, "have worked more change with me and my friend here," (pointing to the boy, whom he had left last so mere a child,) "than they have with you and his blooming mother. The wonder is, not that you did not remember me before, but that you remember me now!"

"You *are* altered, Sir, certainly," said the frank chief. "Your face is thinner, and far graver: and the smooth cheeks of the boy, (for, craving your pardon, you were little more then,) are somewhat darkened by the rough chin and bronzed complexion with which time honours the man."

And the good Cole sighed, as he contrasted Linden's ardent countenance and elastic figure, when he had last beheld him, with the serious and thoughtful face of the person now before him; yet did he inly own that years, if they had in some things deteriorated from, had in others improved, the effect of Clarence's appearance: they had brought decision to his mien, and command to his brow, and had enlarged, to an ampler measure of dignity and power, the perfect proportions of his form. Something too there was in his look like that of a man who has stemmed fate, and won success; and the omen of future triumph, which our fortune-telling chief had drawn from his features when first beheld, seemed already, in no small degree, to have been fulfilled.

Having seen her guest stationed in the seat of honour opposite her father, Lucy withdrew for a few moments, and when she re-appeared, was

followed by a neat-handed sort of Phillis for a country maiden, bearing such kind of "savoury messes," as the house might be supposed to afford.

"At all events, mine host," said Clarence, "you did not desert the fleshpots of Ægypt when you forsook its tents."

"Nay," quoth the worthy Cole, seating himself to the table, "either under the roof or the awning, we may say, in the words of the old epilogue,*

> "'We can but bring you meat and set you stools,
> And to our best cheer say, you all are welcome.'

We are plain people still; but if you can stay till dinner, you shall have a bottle of such wine as our fathers' honest souls would have rejoiced in."

"I am truly sorry that I cannot tarry with

* To the play of "All Fools," by Chapman.

you, after so fair a promise," replied Clarence; "but before night I must be many miles hence."

Lucy came forward timidly. "Do you remember this ring, Sir?" said she (presenting one), "you dropt it in my boy's frock, when we saw you last."

"I did so," answered Clarence. "I trust that he will not now disdain a stranger's offering —May it be as ominous of good luck to him as my night in your caravan has proved to me."

"I am heartily glad to hear that it *has* proved so," said Cole—"now, let us fall to."

CHAPTER III.

> "Out of these convertites
> There is much matter to be heard and learned."
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"If you are bent upon leaving us so soon," said the honest Cole, as Clarence, refusing all farther solicitation to stay, seized the opportunity which the cessation of the rain afforded him, and rose to depart—"if you are bent upon leaving us so soon, I will accompany you back again into the main road, as in duty bound."

"What, immediately on your return?" said Clarence—"no, no—not a step. What would my fair hostess say to me if I suffered it?"

"Rather what would she say to me if I neglected such a courtesy? Why, Sir, when I meet one who knows Shakspeare's sonnets, to say nothing of the lights of the lesser stars, as well as you, only once in eight years, do you not think I would make the most of him? Besides, it is but a quarter of a mile to the road, and I love walking after a shower."

"I am afraid, Mrs. Cole," said Clarence, "that I must be selfish enough to accept the offer." And Mrs. Cole blushing and smiling her assent and adieu, Clarence shook hands with the whole party, grandfather and child included, and took his departure.

As Cole was now a pedestrian, Linden threw the rein over his arm, and walked on foot by his host's side.

"So," said he, smiling, "I must not inquire into the reasons of your retirement?"

"On the contrary," replied Cole; "I have

walked with you the more gladly from my desire of telling them to you, for we all love to seem consistent, even in our chimeras. About six years ago, I confess that I began to wax a little weary of my wandering life; my child, in growing up, required playmates: shall I own that I did not like him to find them among the children of my own comrades? The old scamps were good enough for me, but the young ones were a little too bad for my son. Between you and me only be it said, my juvenile hope was already a little corrupted. The dog Mim—you remember Mim, Sir—secretly taught him to filch as well as if he had been a bantling of his own; and, faith, our smaller goods and chattels, especially of an edible nature, began to disappear, with a rapidity and secrecy that our itinerant palace could very ill sustain. Among us (i. e. the gipsies) there is a law by which no member of the gang may

steal from another; but my little heaven-instructed youth would by no means abide by that distinction; and so boldly designed and well executed were his rogueries, that my paternal anxiety saw nothing before him but Botany Bay on the one hand, and Newgate Court-yard on the other."

"A sad prospect for the heir apparent," quoth Clarence.

"It was so!" answered Cole, "and it made me deliberate. Then, as one gets older one's romance oozes out a little in rheums and catarrhs. I began to perceive that, though I had been bred, I had not been educated, as a gipsy; and what was worse, Lucy, though she never complained, felt that the walls of our palace were not exempt from the damps of winter, nor our royal state from the Caliban curses of

"'Cramps and
Side stitches that do pen our breath up.'

She fell ill; and during her illness I had sundry bright visions of warm rooms and coal fires, a friend, with whom I could converse upon Chaucer, and a tutor for my son, who would teach him other arts but those of picking pockets and pilfering larders. Nevertheless, I was a little ashamed of my own thoughts; and I do not know whether they would have been yet put into practice, but for a trifling circumstance which converted doubt and longing into certainty.

"Our crank cuffins had for some time looked upon me with suspicion and coldness: my superior privileges and comforts they had at first forgiven, on account of my birth and my generosity to them; but by degrees they lost respect for the one, and gratitude for the other; and as I had in a great measure ceased from participating in their adventures, or, during Lucy's illness, which lasted several months,

joining in their festivities, they at length considered me as a drone in a hive, by no means compensating by my services as an ally for my admittance into their horde as a stranger. You will easily conceive, when this once became the state of their feelings towards me, with how ill a temper they brooked the lordship of my stately caravan, and my assumption of superior command. Above all, the women, who were very much incensed at Lucy's constant seclusion from their orgies, fanned the increasing discontent; and, at last, I verily believe that no eye-sore could have been more grievous to the Egyptians than my wooden habitation and the smoke of its single chimney.

"From ill-will, the rascals proceeded to ill-acts; and one dark night, when we were encamped on the very same ground as that which we occupied when we received you, three of them, Mim at their head, attacked me in mine

own habitation. I verily believe, if they had mastered me, they would have robbed and murdered us all; except, perhaps my son, whom they thought I ill-used, by depriving him of Mim's instructive society. Howbeit, I was still stirring when they invaded me, and by the help of the poker, and a tolerably strong arm, I repelled the assailants; but that very night, I passed from the land of Egypt, and made with all possible expedition to the nearest town, which was, as you may remember, W——.

"Here, the very next day, I learnt that the house I now inhabit was to be sold. It had (as I before said), belonged to my mother's family, and my father had sold it a little before his death. It was the home from which I had been stolen, and to which I had been returned: often in my starlit wanderings had I flown to it in thought; and now it seemed as if Providence itself, in offering to my age the asylum I had

above all others coveted for it, was interested in my retirement from the empire of an ungrateful people, and my atonement, in rest, for my past sins in migration.

"Well, Sir, in short, I became the purchaser of the place you have just seen, and I now think that after all there is more happiness in reality than romance: like the laverock, here will I build my nest—

> " 'Here give my weary spirit rest,
> And raise my low-pitch'd thoughts above
> Earth, or what poor mortals love.' "

"And your son," said Clarence, "has he reformed?"

"Oh, yes," answered Cole. "For my part, I believe the mind is less evil than people say it is; its great characteristic is imitation, and it will imitate the good as well as the bad, if we will set the example. I thank Heaven, Sir, that

my boy now might go from Dan to Beersheba, and not filch a groat by the way."

"What do you intend him for?" said Clarence.

"Why, he loves adventure, and, faith, I can't break him of that, for I love it too, so I think I shall get him a commission in the army, in order to give him a fitting and legitimate sphere wherein to indulge his propensities."

"You could not do better," said Clarence. "But your fine sister, what says she to your amendment?"

"Oh! she wrote me a long letter of congratulation upon it, and every other summer, she is graciously pleased to pay me a visit of three months long; at which time, I observe, that poor Lucy is unusually smart and uncomfortable. We sit in the best room, and turn out the dogs; my father-in-law smokes his pipe in the arbour, instead of the drawing-room; and I receive sun-

dry hints, all in vain, on the propriety of dressing for dinner. In return for these attentions on our part, my sister invariably brings my boy a present of a pair of white gloves, and my wife a French ribbon of the newest pattern; in the evening, instead of my reading Shakspeare, she tells us anecdotes of high life, and when she goes away, she gives us, in return for our hospitality, a very general and very gingerly invitation to her house. Lucy sometimes talks to me about accepting it; but I turn a deaf ear to all such overtures, and so we continue much better friends than we should be if we saw more of each other."

"And how long has your father-in-law been with you?"

"Ever since we have been here. He gave up his farm, and cultivates mine for me; for I know nothing of those agricultural matters. I made his coming a little surprise, in order to

please Lucy: you should have witnessed their meeting."

"I think I have now learned all particulars," said Clarence; "it only remains for me to congratulate you: but are you, in truth, never tired of the monotony and sameness of domestic life?"

"Yes—and then I do, as I have just done—saddle little John, and go on an excursion of three or four days, or even weeks, just as the whim seizes me: for I never return till I am driven back by the yearning for home, and the feeling that, after all one's wanderings, there is no place like it. Whether in private life, or public, Sir, in parting with a little of one's liberty, one gets a great deal of comfort in exchange."

"I thank you truly for your frankness," said Clarence; "it has solved many doubts with respect to you, that have often occurred to me. And now we are in the main road, and I must

bid you farewell: we part, but our paths lead to the same object—you return to happiness, and I *seek* it."

"May *you* find, and *I* not lose it, Sir," said the wanderer reclaimed, and, shaking hands, the pair parted.

CHAPTER IV.

"Quicquid agit Rufus, nihil est, nisi Nævia Rufo,
Si gaudet, si flet, si tacet, hanc loquitur :
Cœnat, propinat, poscit, negat, annuit, una est
Nævia ; si non sit Nævia, mutus erit.
Scriberet hesterna patri cum luce salutem
Nævia lux, inquit, Nævia numen, ave."

MART.

"THE last time," said Clarence to himself, "that I travelled this road, on exactly the same errand that I travel now, I do remember that I was honoured by the company of one, in all respects the opposite to mine honest host; for, whereas in the latter there is a luxuriant and wild eccentricity, an open and blunt simplicity, and a

shrewd sense, which looks not after pence, but peace; so, in the mind of the friend of the late Lady Waddilove, there was a flat and hedged-in primness and narrowness of thought—an enclosure of bargains and profits of all species,—mustard pots, rings, monkeys, chains, jars, and plum-coloured velvet inexpressibles, his ideas, with the true alchymy of trade, turned them all into gold; yet was he also as shrewd and acute as he with whose character he contrasts—equally with him seeking comfort and gladness, and an asylum for his old age. Strange that all tempers should have a common object, and never a common road to it. But, since I have begun the contrast, let me hope that it may be extended in its omen unto me; let me hope that, as my encountering with the mercantile Brown brought me ill luck in my enterprise, thereby signifying the crosses and vexations of those who labour in the cheateries, and over-reachings which con-

stitute the vocation of the world; so my meeting with the philosophical Cole, who has, both in vagrancy and rest, found cause to boast of happiness, authorities from his studies to favour his inclination to each, and reason to despise what he, with Sir Kenelm Digby, would wisely call—

"'The fading blossoms of the earth;'

so my meeting with him may prove a token of good speed to mine errand, and thereby denote prosperity to one who seeks not riches, nor honour, nor the conquest of knaves, and the good word of fools, but happy love, and the bourne of its quiet home."

Thus, half meditating, half moralizing, and drawing, like a true lover, an omen of fear or hope from occurrences in which plain reason could have perceived neither type nor token, Clarence continued, and concluded his day's journey. He put up at the same little inn he had

visited three years ago, and watched his opportunity of seeing Lady Flora alone. More fortunate, in that respect, than he had been before, such opportunity the very next day presented to him.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

CHAPTER V.

> "*Duke.*—Sir Valentine!
> *Thur.*—Yonder is Silvia, and Silvia's mine.
> *Val.*—Thurio, give back."
>
> *The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

"I THINK, mamma," said Lady Flora to her mother, "that as the morning is so beautiful, I will go into the pavilion to finish my drawing."

"But Lord Ulswater will be here in an hour, or perhaps less—may I tell him where you are, and suffer him to join you?"

"If you will accompany him," answered Lady Flora, coldly, as she took up her *portefeuille*, and withdrew.

Now the pavilion was a small summer house of stone, situated in the most retired part of the grounds belonging to Westborough Park. It was a favourite retreat with Lady Flora, even in the winter months, for warm carpeting, a sheltered site, and a fireplace constructed more for comfort than economy, made it scarcely less adapted to that season, than to the more genial suns of summer.

The morning was so bright and mild, that Lady Flora left open the door as she entered; she seated herself at the table, and, unmindful of her pretended employment, suffered the *porte-feuille* to remain unopened. Leaning her cheek upon her hand, she gazed vacantly on the ground, and scarcely felt the tears which gathered slowly to her eyes, but, falling not, remained within the fair lids, chill and motionless, as if the thought which drew them there was born of a sorrow less agitated than fixed and silent.

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The shadow of a man darkened the threshold, and there paused.

Slowly did Flora raise her eyes, and the next moment Clarence Linden was by her side, and at her feet.

"Flora," said he, in a tone trembling with its own emotions — "Flora, have years indeed separated us for ever—or dare I hope that we have misconstrued each other's hearts, and that at this moment they yearn to be united with more than the fondness and fidelity of old?—Speak to me, Flora, one word."

But she had sunk on the chair overpowered, surprised, and almost insensible, and it was not for some moments that she could utter words rather wrung from than dictated by her thoughts.

"Cruel and insulting — for what have you come?—is it at such a time that you taunt me with the remembrance of my past folly, or your —your (she paused for a moment confused and

hesitating, but presently recovering herself, rose and added, in a calmer tone)—"Surely you have no excuse for this intrusion—you will suffer me to leave you."

"No!" exclaimed Clarence, violently agitated—"no! Have you not wronged me, stung me, wounded me to the core by your injustice!—and will you not hear now how differently I have deserved from you!—On a bed of fever and pain, I thought only of you; I rose from it animated by the hope of winning you! Though, during the danger of my wound, and my consequent illness, your parents alone, of all my intimate acquaintances, neglected to honour with an inquiry the man whom you professed to consecrate with your regard, yet scarcely could my hand trace a single sentence before I wrote to you requesting an interview, in order to disclose my birth, and claim your plighted faith! That letter was

returned to me unanswered, unopened. My friend and benefactor, whose fortune I now inherit, promised to call upon your father, and advocate my cause. Death anticipated his kindness. Scarcely had the ground closed upon his coffin, before, even impiously occupied with you, I came to this very spot! For three days I hovered about your house, seeking the meeting I now enjoy! I could not any longer bear the torturing suspense I endured—I wrote to you—your father answered the letter. Here—here—I have it still—read!—note well the cool, the damning insult of each line! I see that you knew not of this: I rejoice at it! Can you wonder that, on receiving it, I subjected myself no more to such affronts? I hastened abroad. On my return I met you. Where? In crowds—in the glitter of midnight assemblies—in the whirl of what the vain call pleasure! I observed your countenance,

your manner; was there in either a single token of endearing or regretful remembrance? None! I strove to harden my heart; I entered into politics, business, intrigue—I hoped, I longed, I burned to forget you, but in vain!

"At last I heard that Rumour, though it had long preceded, had not belied the truth, and that you were to be married—married to Lord Ulswater! I will not say what I suffered, or how idly I summoned pride to resist affection! But I would not have come now to molest you, Flora—to trouble your nuptial rejoicings with one thought of me, if, forgive me, I had not suddenly dreamt that I had cause to hope you had mistaken, not rejected my heart; that—you turn away, Flora!—you blush!—you weep!—Oh, tell me, by one word, one look, that I was not deceived!"

"No, no, Clarence," said Flora, struggling with her tears; "it is too late, too late now!

Why, why did I not know this before? I have promised, I am pledged!—in less than two months I shall be the wife of another!"

"Never," cried Clarence, "never! You promised on a false belief; they will not bind you to such a promise. Who is he that claims you? I am his equal in birth—in the world's name—and oh, by what worlds his superior in love! I will advance my claim to you in his very teeth—nay, I will not stir from these domains till you, your father, and my rival have repaired my wrongs."

"Be it so, Sir!"—cried a voice behind, and Clarence turned and beheld Lord Ulswater! His dark countenance was flushed with rage, which he in vain endeavoured to conceal; and the smile of scorn that he strove to summon to his lip, made a ghastly and unnatural contrast with the lowering of his brow, and the fire of his eyes—"Be it so, Sir," he said, slowly advancing,

and confronting Clarence. "You will dispute my claims to the hand Lady Flora Ardenne has long promised to one who, however unworthy of the gift, knows, at least, how to defend it. It is well; let us finish the dispute elsewhere. It is not the first time we shall have met, if not as rivals, as foes."

Clarence turned from him without reply, for he saw Lady Westborough had just entered the pavilion, and stood mute and transfixed at the door, with surprise, fear, and anger depicted upon her regal and beautiful countenance.

"It is to you, Madam," said Clarence, approaching towards her, "that I venture to appeal. Your daughter and I, four long years ago, exchanged our vows; you flattered me with the hope that those vows were not displeasing to you; since then, a misunderstanding, deadly to my happiness and to her's, divided us. I come now to explain it. My birth may have seemed

obscure; I come to clear it: my conduct doubtful; I come to vindicate it. I find Lord Ulswater my rival. I am willing to compare my pretensions to his. I acknowledge that he has titles which I have not, but which I have only to ask from royal favour to obtain—that he has wealth, to which mine is but competence—but wealth, as the means of happiness, is to be referred to your daughter, to none else. You have only, in an alliance with me, to consider my character and my lineage; the latter flows from blood as pure as that which warms the veins of my rival; the former stands already upon an eminence to which Lord Ulswater, in his loftiest visions, could never aspire. For the rest, Madam, I adjure you, solemnly, as you value your peace of mind, your daughter's happiness, your freedom from the agonies of future remorse, and unavailing regret—I adjure you not to divorce those whom God, who speaks in

the deep heart, and the plighted vow, has already joined. This is a question in which your daughter's permanent woe or lasting happiness, from this present hour to the last sand of life, is concerned. It is to her that I refer it—let her be the judge."

And Clarence moved from Lady Westborough, who, agitated, confused, awed by the spell of a power and a nature of which she had not dreamed, stood pale and speechless, vainly endeavouring to reply— he moved from her towards Lady Flora, who leant, sobbing and convulsed with contending emotions, against the wall; but Lord Ulswater, whose fiery blood was boiling with passion, placed himself between Clarence and the unfortunate object of the contention.

"Touch her not, approach her not!" he said, with a fierce and menacing tone. "Till you have proved your pretensions superior to mine, un-

known, presuming, and probably base born as you are, you will only pass over my body to your claims."

Clarence stood still for one moment, evidently striving to master the wrath which literally swelled his form beyond its ordinary proportions; and Lady Westborough recovering herself in the brief pause, passed between the two, and taking her daughter's arm, led her from the pavilion.

"Stay, Madam, for one instant!" cried Clarence; and he caught hold of her robe.

Lady Westborough stood quite erect and still, and drawing her stately figure to its full height, said with that quiet dignity by which a woman so often stills for a brief while the angrier passions of men, "I lay the prayer and command of a mother upon you, Lord Ulswater, and on you, Sir, whatever be your real rank and name, not to make mine and my daughter's

presence, the scene of a contest which dishonours both. Still farther, if Lady Flora's hand and my approval be an object of desire to either, I make it a peremptory condition with both of you, that a dispute already degrading to her name, pass not from word to act. For you, Mr. Linden, if so I may call you, I promise that my daughter shall be left free and unbiassed to give that reply to your singular conduct, which I doubt not her own dignity and sense will suggest!"

"By Heaven!" exclaimed Lord Ulswater, utterly beside himself with rage which, suppressed at the beginning of Lady Westborough's speech, had been kindled into double fury by its conclusion, "you will not suffer Lady Flora, no, nor any one but her affianced bridegroom, her only legitimate defender, to answer this arrogant intruder! You cannot think that her hand, the hand of my future wife, shall

trace line or word to one who has so insulted her with his addresses, and me with his rivalry."

"Man!" cried Clarence, abruptly, and seizing Lord Ulswater fiercely by the arm, "there are some causes which will draw fire from ice—beware—beware how you incense me to pollute my soul with the blood of a ——"

"What!" exclaimed Lord Ulswater.

Clarence bent down and whispered one word in his ear.

Had that word been the spell with which the sorcerers of old disarmed the fiend, it could not have wrought a greater change upon Lord Ulswater's mien and face. He staggered back several paces; the glow of his swarthy cheek faded into a death-like paleness; the word which passion had conjured to his tongue, died there in silence; and he stood with eyes dilated and fixed on Clarence's face, on which their increas-

ing gaze seemed to force some unwilling certainty.

But Linden did not wait for him to recover his self-possession, he hurried after Lady Westborough, who, with her daughter, was hastening home.

"Pardon me, Lady Westborough," he said (as he approached), with a tone and air of deep respect, "pardon me—but will you suffer me to hope that Lady Flora and yourself will, in a moment of greater calmness, consider over all I have said?—and—that she—that you, Lady Flora, (added he, changing the object of his address) will vouchsafe one line of unprejudiced, unbiassed reply, to a love which, however misrepresented and calumniated, has in it, I dare to say, nothing that can disgrace her to whom, with an enduring constancy, and undimmed, though unhoping ardour, it has been inviolably dedicated?"

Lady Flora, though she spoke not, lifted her eyes to his, and in that glance was a magic which made his heart burn with a sudden and flashing joy that atoned for the darkness of years.

"I assure you, Sir," said Lady Westborough, touched in spite of herself with the sincerity and respect of Clarence's bearing, "that Lady Flora will reply to any letter of explanation or proposal; for myself, I will not even see her answer. Where shall it be sent to you?"

"I have taken my lodgings at the inn, by your park gates. I shall remain there—till—till —"

Clarence paused, for his heart was full; and leaving the sentence to be filled up, as his listeners pleased, he drew himself aside from their path, and suffered them to proceed.

As he was feeding his eyes with the last glimpse

of their forms, ere a turn in the grounds snatched them from his view, he heard a rapid step behind, Lord Ulswater, approaching, laid his hand upon Linden's shoulder, and said calmly,

"Are you furnished with proof to support the word you uttered?"

"I am!" replied Clarence, haughtily.

"And will you favour me with it?"

"At your leisure, my lord," rejoined Clarence.

"Enough!—Name your time, and I will attend you."

"On Tuesday:—I require till then to produce my witnesses."

"So be it—yet stay: on Tuesday I have military business at W——, some miles from hence—the next day let it be—the place of meeting where you please."

"Here, then, my lord," answered Clarence, "you have insulted me grossly, before Lady

Westborough, and your affianced bride, and before them my vindication and answer should be given."

"You are right," said Lord Ulswater; "be it here, at the hour of twelve." Clarence bowed his assent, and withdrew.

Lord Ulswater remained on the spot, with downcast eyes, and a brow on which thought had succeeded passion.

"If true," said he aloud, though unconsciously, "if this be true, why then I owe him reparation, and he shall have it at my hands. I owe it to him on my account, and that of one now no more. Till we meet, I will not again see Lady Flora; after that meeting, perhaps I may resign her for ever."

And with these words the young nobleman, who, despite of many evil and overbearing qualities, had, as we have said, his redeeming virtues, in which a capricious and unsteady gene-

rosity was one, walked slowly to the house—wrote a brief note to Lady Westborough, the purport of which the next chapter will disclose; and then, summoning his horse, flung himself on its back, and rode hastily away.

CHAPTER VI.

"We will examine if those accidents,
Which common fame calls injuries, happen to him
Deservedly or no."

The New Inn.

FROM LORD ULSWATER TO LADY WESTBOROUGH.

"Forgive me, dearest Lady Westborough, for my violence—you know and will allow for the infirmities of my temper. I have to make you and Lady Flora one request, which I trust you will not refuse me.

"Do not see or receive any communication from Mr. Linden till Wednesday; and on that day, at the hour of twelve, suffer me to meet

him at your house. I will then either prove him to be the basest of impostors, or, if I fail in this, and Lady Flora honours my rival with one sentiment of preference, I will, without a murmur, submit to her decree and my rejection. Dare I trust that this petition will be accorded to one who is, with great regard and esteem,

"&c. &c. &c."

"This is fortunate," said Lady Westborough, gently to her daughter, who, leaning her head on her mother's bosom, suffered hopes, the sweeter for their long sleep, to divide, if not wholly to possess, her heart. "We shall have now time, well and carefully to reflect over what will be best for your future happiness. We owe this delay to one to whom you have been affianced. Let us, therefore, now merely write to Mr. Linden, to inform him of Lord Ulswater's request; and to say, that if he will

meet his lordship at the time appointed, we, that is *I*, shall be happy to see him."

Lady Flora sighed, but she saw the reasonableness of her mother's proposal, and pressing Lady Westborough's hand, murmured her assent.

"At all events," thought Lady Westborough, as she wrote to Clarence, "the affair can but terminate to advantage. If Lord Ulswater proves Mr. Linden's unworthiness, the suit of the latter is, of course, at rest for ever: if not, and Mr. Linden be indeed all that he asserts, my daughter's choice cannot be an election of reproach. Lord Ulswater promises peaceably to withdraw his pretensions; and though Mr. Linden may not possess his rank or fortune, he is certainly one with whom, if of ancient blood, any family would be proud of an alliance."

Blending with these reflections a considerable share of curiosity and interest in a secret which

partook so strongly of romance, Lady Westborough dispatched her note to Clarence. The answer returned was brief, respectful, and not only acquiescent in, but grateful for the proposal.

With this arrangement both Lady Westborough and Lady Flora were compelled, though with very different feelings, to be satisfied; and an agreement was tacitly established between them, to the effect, that if Linden's name passed unblemished through the appointed ordeal, Lady Flora was to be left to, and favoured in, her own election. While, on the contrary, if Lord Ulswater succeeded in the proof he had spoken of, his former footing in the family was to be fully re-established, and our unfortunate adventurer for ever discarded.

To this Lady Flora readily consented; for with a sanguine and certain trust in her lover's truth and honour, which was tenfold more

strong for her late suspicions, she would not allow herself a doubt as to the result; and with an impatience, mingled with a rapturous exhilaration of spirit, which brought back to her the first greenness and radiancy of her youngest years, she counted the hours and moments to the destined day.

Meanwhile Lady Westborough, satisfied that in neither case her daughter's happiness (*i. e.* marriage) could *materially suffer*, and with a little prepossession in favour of Clarence, which counterbalanced, in some measure, his worldly disadvantages, in comparison with the broad lands and lofty name of Ulswater, soothed her impatience, by wondering at the singularity of Clarence's sudden reappearance, his mysterious secret, and the fate which, having preserved her (beauty as she was) through her best days in all the brilliant tameness of patrician life, had at last implicated her, in the person of her daughter,

in the *denouement* of what might be called, for such life, a very tolerable mystery and romance.

While such was the state of affairs at Westborough Park, Clarence was again on horseback, and on another excursion. By the noon of the day following that which had seen his eventful meeting with Lady Flora, he found himself approaching the extreme boundaries of the county in which Mordaunt Court, and the memorable town of W—— were situated. The characteristics of the country were now materially changed from those which gave to the vicinity of Algernon's domains its wild and uncultivated aspect.

As Clarence slowly descended a hill of considerable steepness and length, a prospect of singular and luxurious beauty opened to his view. The noblest of England's rivers was seen through "turfs and shades and flowers," pursuing its

silver-winding way. On the opposite banks lay, embosomed in the golden glades of autumn, the busy and populous town, that from the height seemed still and lifeless as an enchanted city over which the mid-day sun hung like a guardian spirit. Behind, in sweeping diversity, stretched wood and dale, and fields despoiled of their rich harvest, yet still presenting a yellow surface to the eye; and ever and anon some bright patch of green, demanding the gaze as if by a lingering spell from the past spring; while, here and there, spire and hamlet studded the landscape, or some lowly cot lay, backed by the rising ground or the silent woods, white and solitary, and sending up its faint tribute of smoke in spires to the altars of Heaven. The river was more pregnant of life than its banks; barge and boat were gliding gaily down the wave, and the glad oar of the frequent and slen-

der vessels, consecrated to pleasure, was seen dimpling the water, made by distance smoother than glass.

On the right side of Clarence's road, as he descended the hill, lay wide plantations of fir and oak, divided from the road by a park paling, the uneven sides of which were covered with brown moss, and which, at rare openings in the young wood, gave glimpses of a park, seemingly extending over great space, the theatre of many a stately copse, and oaken grove, which might have served the druids with fane and temple meet for the savage sublimity of their worship.

Upon these unfrequent views, Clarence checked his horse, and gazed, with emotions sweet yet bitter, over the pales, along the green expanse which they contained. And once, when through the trees he caught a slight glimpse of the white walls of the mansion they adorned, all the years

of his childhood seemed rolled fresh and revived upon his heart, thrilling to its farthest depths with a mighty and sorrowful, yet sweet melody, and

"Singing of boyhood back—the voices of his home."

Home! yes, amidst those groves had the April of his life lavished its mingled smiles and tears! There was the spot hallowed by his earliest joys, and the scene of sorrows still more sacred than joys!—and now, after many years, the exiled boy came back, a prosperous and thoughtful man, to take but one brief glance of that home which to him had been less hospitable than a stranger's dwelling, and to find a witness, among those who remembered him, of his very birth and identity!

He wound the ascent at last, and entering a small town at the foot of the hill, which was exactly facing the larger one on the opposite shore of the river, put up his horse at one of the

inns; and then, with an indifferent brow, but a beating heart, remounted the hill, and, entering the park by one of its lodges, found himself once more in the haunts of his childhood.

CHAPTER V.

"Oh, the steward, the steward—I might have guessed as much."

Tales of the Crusaders.

The evening was already beginning to close, and Clarence was yet wandering in the park, and retracing, with his heart's eye, each knoll, and tree, and tuft, once so familiar to his wanderings.

At the time we shall again bring him personally before the reader, he was leaning against an iron fence that, running along the left wing of the house, separated the pleasure-grounds from

the park, and gazing, with folded arms and wistful eyes, upon the scene on which the dusk of twilight was gradually gathering.

The house was built originally in the reign of Charles II.: it had since received alteration and additions, and now presented to the eye a vast pile of Grecian, or rather Italian architecture, heterogeneously blended with the massive window, the stiff coping, and the heavy roof which the age immediately following the revolution introduced. The extent of the building, and the grandeur of the circling demesnes, were sufficient to render the mansion imposing in effect; while, perhaps, the very style of the architecture, to our own taste, or rather associations, not displeasing, was calculated to conjoin a stately comfort with magnificence, and to atone in solidity for any deficiency in grace. At a little distance from the house, and placed on a much more commanding site, were some

ancient and ivy-grown ruins, now scanty indeed, and fast mouldering into decay, but sufficient to shew the antiquarian the remains of what once had been a hold of no ordinary size and power. These were the wrecks of the old mansion, which was recorded by tradition to have been reduced to this state by accidental fire, during the banishment of its loyal owner, in the time of the Protectorate. Upon his return, the present house was erected; and the rumours of that day paid the builders in the gold of that great French king who well knew how to corrupt in peace as to devastate in war, and who found few Englishmen, in the reign of the vilest of the Stuarts, proof against the example which their royal master had condescended to set them.

That founder of the new mansion left, however, a gallant and not ungracious name to his

posterity; and his pictured likeness, on which the reckless gaiety, unthinking courage, and searing though frivolous vices of the age, had admirably fixed upon the canvass the very portrait of the times, was still more lingeringly dwelt upon by the exhibiting attendant and the listening visitor, than all the grim visages and mailed figures of his nobler and ruder ancestors, which had been snatched from the conflagration of their ancient hall to deck the home and monument of their glittering yet unworthy successor.

As Clarence was thus stationed, he perceived an elderly man approach towards him. "This is fortunate," said he to himself—"the very person I have been watching for. Well, years have passed lightly over old Wardour: still the same precise garb—the same sturdy and slow step—the same upright form. Of a verity

he is, in outward man at least, the pink and pattern of stewards, and would have been a fitting seneschal for Sir Hubert himself!"

The person thus designated now drew near enough for parlance; and in a tone a little authoritative, though very respectful, inquired if Clarence had any business to transact with him.

"I beg pardon," said Clarence, slouching his hat over his face, "for lingering so near the house at this hour; but I have seen it many years ago, and indeed been a guest within its walls; and it is rather my interest for an old friend, than my curiosity to examine a new one, which you are to blame for my trespass."

"Oh, Sir," answered Mr. Wardour, a short and rather stout man, of about sixty-four, attired in a chocolate coat, grey breeches, and silk stockings of the same dye, which, by the waning light, took a sombrer and sadder hue—

"Oh, Sir—pray make no apology. I am only sorry the hour is so late, that I cannot offer to shew you the interior of the house: perhaps, if you are staying in the neighbourhood, you would like to see it to-morrow. You were here, I take it, Sir, in my old lord's time?"

"I was!—upon a visit to his second son—we had been boys together."

"What! Master Clinton?" cried the old man, with extreme animation; and then suddenly changing his voice, added, in a subdued and saddened tone, "Ah! poor young gentleman, I wonder where he is now?"

"Why—is he not in this country?" asked Clarence.

"Yes—no—that is, I can't exactly say where he is—I wish I could—poor Master Clinton—I loved him as my own son."

"You surprise me," said Clarence. "Is there any thing in the fate of Clinton L'Es-

trange that calls forth your pity? If so, you would gratify a much better feeling than curiosity if you would inform me of it. The fact is, that I came here to seek him; for I have been absent from the country many years, and on my return, my first inquiry was for my old friend and schoolfellow. None knew any thing of him in London, and I imagined, therefore, that he might have settled down into a country gentleman. I was fully prepared to find him marshalling the fox-hounds or beating the preserves; and you may consequently imagine my mortification on learning, at my inn, that he had not been residing here for many years;—farther I know not!"

"Ay—ay—Sir," said the old steward, who had listened very attentively to Clarence's detail, "had you pressed one of the village gossips a little closer, you would doubtless have learned more! But it's a story I don't much

love telling, although formerly I could have talked of Master Clinton, by the hour together, to any one who would have had the patience to listen to me."

"You have really created in me a very painful desire to learn more," said Clarence; "and if I am not intruding on any family secrets, you would oblige me greatly by whatever information you may think proper to afford to an early and attached friend of the person in question."

"Well, Sir, well," replied Mr. Wardour, who, without imputation on his discretion, loved talking as well as any other old gentleman of sixty-four, "if you will condescend to step up to my house, I shall feel happy and proud to converse with a friend of my dear young master's; and you are heartily welcome to the information I can give you."

"I thank you sincerely," said Clarence; "but

suffer me to propose, as an amendment to your offer, that you accompany me for an hour or two to my inn."

"Nay, Sir," answered the old gentleman, in a piqued tone, "I trust you will not disdain to honour me with your company. Thank heaven I can *afford*" (an Englishman's constant thought and expression) "to be hospitable now and then."

Clarence, who seemed to have his own reasons for the amendment he had proposed, still struggled against this offer, but was at last, from fear of offending the honest steward, obliged to accede.

Striking across a path, which led through a corner of the plantation, to a space of ground, containing a small garden, quaintly trimmed in the Dutch taste, and a brick house of moderate dimensions, half overgrown with ivy and jessamine, Clarence and his invitor paused at the door

of the said mansion, and the latter welcomed his guest to his abode.

"Pardon me," said Clarence, as a damsel in waiting opened the door, "but a very severe attack of rheumatism obliges me to keep on my hat; you will, I hope, indulge me in my rudeness."

"To be sure—to be sure, Sir. I, myself, suffer terribly from rheumatism in the winter—though you look young, Sir, very young, to have an old man's complaint. Ah, the people of my day were more careful of themselves, and that is the reason we are such stout fellows in our age."

And the worthy steward looked complacently down at legs, which very substantially filled their comely investments.

"True, Sir," said Clarence, laying his hand upon that of the steward, who was just about to open the door of an apartment; "but suffer

me at least to request you not to introduce me to any of the ladies of your family. I could not, were my very life at stake, think of affronting them by not doffing my hat. I have the keenest sense of what is due to the sex, and I must seriously entreat you, for the sake of my health, during the whole of the coming winter, to suffer our conversation not to take place in their presence."

"Sir—I honour your politeness," said the prim little steward :—"I, myself, like every true Briton, reverence the ladies; we will, therefore, retire to my little study. Mary, girl," (turning to the attendant) "see that we have a nice chop for supper, in half an hour; and tell your mistress that I have a gentleman of quality with me upon particular business, and must not be disturbed."

With these injunctions, the steward led the

way to the farther end of the house, and, having ushered his guest into a small parlour, adorned with sundry law-books, a great map of the estate, a print of the late owner of it, a rusty gun, slung over the fire-place, two stuffed pheasants, and a little mahogany buffet—having, we say, led Clarence to this sanctuary of retiring stewardship, he placed a seat for him, and said—

"Between you and me, Sir, be it respectfully said, I am not sorry that our little confabulation should pass alone. Ladies are very delightful—very delightful, certainly; but they won't let one tell a story one's own way—they are fidgety, you know, Sir—fidgety—nothing more; it's a trifle, but it's unpleasant; besides, my wife was master Clinton's foster-mother, and she can't hear a word about him, without running on into a long rigmarole of what he did as

a baby, and so forth. I like people to be chatty, Sir, but not garrulous; I can't bear garrulity—at least in a female.

"But suppose, Sir, we defer our story till after supper? A glass of wine or warm punch makes talk glide more easily; besides, Sir, I want something to comfort me when I talk about Master Clinton. Poor gentleman, he was so comely, so handsome!"

"Did you think so?" said Clarence, turning towards the fire.

"Think so!" ejaculated the Steward, almost angrily, and forthwith he launched out into an encomium on the perfections, personal, moral, and mental, of Master Clinton, which lasted till the gentle Mary entered to lay the cloth. This reminded the old steward of the glass of wine which was so efficacious in making talk glide easily; and, going to the buffet before

mentioned, he drew forth two bottles, both of port. Having carefully and warily decanted both, he changed the subject of his praise; and, assuring Clarence that the wine he was about to taste was, at least, as old as Master Clinton, having been purchased in joyous celebration of the young gentleman's birth-day, he whiled away the minutes with a glowing eulogy on its generous qualities, till Mary entered with the cœnatorial viands.

Clarence, with an appetite sharpened, despite his romance, by a long fast, did ample justice to the fare; and the old steward, warming into familiarity with the virtues of the far-famed port, chatted and laughed in a strain half simple and half shrewd, which rendered him no disagreeable or mirthless host.

The fire being stirred up to a free blaze, the hearth swept, and all the tokens of supper, save

and except the kingly bottle and its subject glasses, being removed, the steward and his guest drew closer to each other, and the former began his story.

CHAPTER VI.

"The actors are at hand, and by their shew,
You shall know all that you are like to know."
Midsummer's Night's Dream.

"You know, probably, Sir, that my late lord was twice married: by his first wife he had three children, only one of whom, the youngest, though now the present earl, survived the first period of infancy. When Master Francis, as we always called him, in spite of his accession to the title of viscount, was about six years old, my lady died, and, a year afterwards, my lord married again. His second wife was uncom-

monly handsome: she was a Miss Talbot, (a Catholic,) daughter of Colonel Talbot, and niece to the celebrated beau, Squire Talbot, of Scarsdale Park. Poor lady! they say that she married my lord through a momentary pique against a former lover. However that may be, she was a fine, high-spirited creature—very violent in temper, to be sure, but generous and kind when her passion was over; and however haughty to her equals, charitable and compassionate to the poor.

"She had but one son, Master Clinton. Never, Sir, shall I forget the rejoicings that were made at his birth; for my lord doated on his present wife, and had disliked his first, whom he had married for her fortune; and it was therefore natural that he should prefer the child of the present wife to Master Francis. Ah, it is sad to think how love can change! Well, Sir, my lord seemed literally to be wrapt

up in the infant: he nursed it, and fondled it, and hung over it, as if he had been its mother rather than its father. My lady desired that it might be christened by one of her family names; and my lord consenting, it was called Clinton.—(The wine is with you, Sir! Do observe that it has not changed colour in the least, notwithstanding its age!)

"My lord was fond of a quiet, retired life; indeed, he was a great scholar, and spent the chief part of his time among his books. Dr. Latinas, the young gentleman's tutor, said his lordship made Greek verses better than Dr. Latinas could make English ones, so you may judge of his learning. But my lady went constantly to town, and was among the gayest of the gay; nor did she often come down here without bringing a whole troop of guests. Lord help us, what goings on there used to be at the great house!—such dancing and music, and

dining, and supping, and shooting-parties, fishing-parties, gipsy-parties; you would have thought all England was merry-making there.

"But my lord, though he indulged my lady in all her whims and extravagance, seldom took much share in them himself. He was constantly occupied with his library and children, nor did he ever suffer either Master Francis or Master Clinton to mix with the guests. He kept them very close at their studies, and when the latter was six years old, I do assure you, Sir, he could say his *Propria quæ maribus* better than I can—(You don't drink, Sir.) When Master Francis was sixteen, and Master Clinton eight, the former was sent abroad on his travels with a German tutor, and did not return to England for many years afterwards; meanwhile Master Clinton grew up to the age of fourteen, increasing in comeliness and goodness. He was very fond of his studies, much more so than Master

Francis had been, and was astonishingly forward for his years. So my lord loved him better and better, and would scarcely ever suffer him to be out of his sight.

"When Master Clinton was about the age I mentioned, viz. fourteen, a gentleman of the name of Sir Clinton Manners, became a constant visitor at the house. Report said that he was always about my lady in London, at Ranelagh, and the ball-rooms and routs, and all the fine places—and certainly he was scarcely ever from her side in the pleasure parties at the park. But my lady said that he was a cousin of her's, and an old playmate in childhood, and so he was—and, unhappily for her, something more too. My lord, however, shut up in his library, did not pay any attention to my lady's intimacy with Sir Clinton; on the contrary, as he was a cousin and friend of her's, his lordship seemed always happy to see him, and was the

only person in the neighbourhood who had no suspicion of what was going on.

"Oh, Sir, it's a melancholy story, and I can scarcely persuade myself to tell it. (It is really delicious wine this — six and twenty years old last *birth-day*—to say nothing of its age before I bought it—Ah!)—Well, Sir, the blow came at last like a thunderclap — my lady finding disguise was in vain, went off with Sir Clinton. Letters were discovered which showed that they had corresponded for years—that he was her lover before marriage—that she, in a momentary passion with him, had accepted my lord's offer—that she had always repented her precipitation—and that she had called her son after his name—all this, and much more, Sir, did my lord learn, as it were, at a single blow.

"He obtained a divorce, and Sir Clinton and my lady went abroad. But from that time my lord was never the same man. Alwys proud

and gloomy, he now became intolerably violent and morose. He shut himself up, saw no company of any description, rarely left the house, and never the park—and from being one of the gayest places in the country, Sir, the mansion became as dreary and deserted as if it had been haunted. (It is for you to begin the second bottle, Sir.)

"But the most extraordinary change in my lord was in his conduct to Master Clinton—from doating upon him, to a degree that would have spoilt any temper less sweet than my poor young master's, he took the most violent aversion to him. From the circumstance of his name, and the long intimacy existing between my lady and her lover, his lordship would not believe that Master Clinton was his own child; and indeed I must confess there was good ground for his suspicions. Besides this, Master Clinton took very much after his mother. He

had her eyes, hair, and beautiful features, so that my lord could never see him without being reminded of his disgrace : therefore, whenever the poor young gentleman came into his presence, he would drive him out, with oaths and threats which rung through the whole house. He could not even bear that he should have any attendance or respect from the servants, for he considered him quite as an alien like, and worse than a stranger ; and his lordship's only delight seemed to consist in putting upon him every possible indignity and affront. But Master Clinton was a high spirited young gentleman, and after having in vain endeavoured to soothe my lord by compliance and respect, he at last utterly avoided his lordship's presence.

"He gave up his studies in a great measure, and wandered about the park and woods all day, and sometimes even half the night ; his mother's conduct, and his father's unkindness

seemed to prey upon his health and mind, and, at last, he grew almost as much altered as my lord. From being one of the merriest boys possible, full of life and spirits, he became thoughtful and downcast, his step lost its lightness, and his eye all the fire which used once quite to warm one's heart when one looked at it; in short, Sir, the sins of the mother were visited as much upon the child as the husband. (Not the least tawney, Sir, you see, though it is so old—Ah !)

"My lord at first seemed to be glad that he now never saw his son ; but, by degrees, I think he missed the pleasure of venting his spleen upon him ; and so he ordered my young master not to stir out without his leave, but confined him closer than ever to his studies. Well, Sir, (if it were not for this port, I could not get out another sentence—Ah !) there used then to be sad scenes between them : my lord was a terribly

passionate man, and said things sharper than a two-edged sword, as the psalms express it; and though Master Clinton was one of the mildest and best tempered boys imaginable, yet he could not at all times curb his spirit; and to my mind, when a man is perpetually declaring he is not your father, one may now and then be forgiven in forgetting that you are to behave as his son.

"Things went on in this way sadly enough for about three years and a-half, when Master Clinton was near eighteen. One evening, after my lord had been unusually stormy, Master Clinton's spirit warmed, I suppose, and from word to word, the dispute increased, till my lord, in a furious rage, ordered in the servants, and told them to horsewhip his son. Imagine, Sir, what a disgrace to that noble house? But there was not one of them who would not rather have cut off his right hand, than laid a finger

upon Master Clinton, so greatly was he beloved; and, at last, my lord summoned his own gentleman, a German, six foot high, entirely devoted to his lordship, and commanded him, upon pain of instant dismissal, to make use, in his presence, of a horsewhip which he put into his hand.

"The German did not dare refuse, so he approached Master Clinton. The servants were still in the room, and perhaps they would have been bold enough to rescue Master Clinton, had there been any need of their assistance; but he was a tall youth, as bold as a hero, and when the German approached, he caught him by the throat, threw him down, and very nearly strangled him; he then, while my lord was speechless with rage, left the room, and did not return all night. (What a body it has, Sir—Ah,)

"The next morning I was in a little room adjoining my lord's study, looking over some

papers and maps. His lordship did not know of my presence, but was sitting alone at breakfast, when Master Clinton suddenly entered the study; the door leading to my room was ajar, and I heard all the conversation that ensued.

"My lord asked him very angrily how he had dared absent himself all night; but Master Clinton making no reply to this question, said, in a very calm, loud voice, which I think I hear now—'My lord, after the insult you have *presumed*—(yes, Sir, *presumed* was the word)—to offer to me, it is perhaps unnecessary to observe, that nothing could induce me to remain under your roof. I come, therefore, to take my last leave of you.'

He paused, and my lord (probably like me, being taken by surprise) making no reply, he continued. 'You have often told me, my lord, that I am not your son; and it is possible that I may not be so — so much the less, therefore, am I

bound to submit to the injustice and cruelty which the experience of nearly four years warrants me to expect for the future—and so much the more must you rejoice at the idea of ridding your presence of an intruder.' 'And how, Sir, do you expect to live, except upon my bounty?' exclaimed my lord. 'You remember,' answered my young master, 'that a humble dependent of my mother's family, who had been our governess in childhood, left me, at her death, the earnings of her life. I believe they amount to nearly a thousand pounds -- I look to your lordship's honour either for the principal or the yearly interest, as may please you best: farther I ask not from you.' 'And do you think, Sir,' cried my lord, almost screaming with passion, 'that upon that beggarly pittance you shall go forth to dishonour, more than it is yet dishonoured, the name of my ancient house? Do you think, Sir, that that name, to which you have no pre-

tension, though the law iniquitously grants it you, shall be sullied either with trade or robbery? for to one or the other you must necessarily be driven.' 'I foresaw your speech, my lord, and am prepared with an answer. Far be it from me to thrust myself into any family, the head of which thinks proper to reject me—far be it from me to honour my humble fortunes with a name which I am as willing as yourself to disown: I purpose, therefore, to adopt a new one; and whatever may be my future fate, that name will screen me both from your remembrance and the world's knowledge. Are you satisfied now, my lord?'

"His lordship did not answer for some minutes; at last, he said sneeringly, 'Go, boy, go! I am delighted to hear you have decided so well. Leave word with my steward where you wish your clothes to be sent to you; God for-

bid I should rob you either of your wardrobe or your princely fortune. Wardour will transmit to you the latter, even to the last penny, by the same conveyance as that which is honoured by the former. And now good morning, Sir; yet stay, and mark my words—never dare to re-enter my house, or to expect an iota more of fortune or favour from me. And, hark you, Sir—if you dare violate your word, if you dare, during my life, at least, assume a name which you were born to sully, my curse, my deepest, heartiest, eternal curse be upon your head in this world and the next?' 'Fear not, my lord, my word is pledged,' said the young gentleman; and the next moment I heard his parting step in the hall.

"Sir, my heart was full, (your glass is empty!) and my head spun round as if I were on a precipice; but I was determined my young

master should not go till I had caught another glimpse of his bonny face, so I gently left the room I was in, and hastening out of the house by a private entrance, met Master Clinton in the park, not very far from the spot where I saw you, Sir, last night. To my surprise, there was no sign of grief or agitation upon his countenance: I had never seen him look so proud, or for years so happy.

'Wardour,' said he, in a gay tone, when he saw me, 'I was going to your house: my father has at last resolved that I should, like my brother, commence my travels, and I wish to leave with you the address of the place to which my clothes, &c. will be sent.'

"I could not contain any longer when I heard this, Sir; I burst into tears, confessed that I had accidentally heard his conversation with my lord, and besought him not to depart so hastily and on so small a fortune; but he

shook his head, and would not hear me. 'Believe me, my good Wardour,' said he, 'that since my unhappy mother's flight, I have never felt so elated or so happy as I do now: one should go through what I have done to learn the rapture of independence.' He then told me to have his luggage sent to him, under his initials of C. L., at the Golden Fleece, the principal inn in the town of W——, which, you know, Sir, is at the other end of the county, on the road to London; and then kindly shaking me by the hand, he broke away from me; but he turned back before he had got three paces, and said, (and then, for the first time, the pride of his countenance fell, and the tears stood in his eyes) 'Wardour, do not divulge what you have heard: put as good a face upon my departure as you can, and let the blame, if any, fall upon me, not upon your master: after all, he is to be pitied, not blamed, and I can

never forget that he once loved me.' He did not wait for my answer, perhaps he did not like to shew me how much he was affected, but hurried down the park, and I soon lost sight of him. My lord that very morning sent for me, demanded what address his son had left, and gave me a letter, enclosing, I suppose, a bill for my poor young master's fortune, ordering it to be sent with the clothes immediately.

"Sir, I have never seen or heard aught of the dear gentleman since: you must forgive me, I cannot help crying, Sir—(the wine is with you)."

"But the mother, the mother!" said Clarence, earnestly, "what became of her? she died abroad, two years since, did she not?"

"She did, Sir," answered the honest steward, refilling his glass. "They say that she lived very unhappily with Sir Clinton, who did not

marry her, owing, I believe, to her religion, till all of a sudden she disappeared, none knew whither."

Clarence redoubled his attention.

"At last," resumed the steward, "two years ago, a letter came from her to my lord; she was a nun in some convent (in Italy, I think,) to which she had at the time of her disappearance secretly retired. The letter was written on her death-bed, and so affectingly, I suppose, that even my stern lord was in tears for several days after he received it. But the principal passage in it was relative to her son: it assured my lord (for so with his own lips he told me just before he died, four months ago,) that Master Clinton was in truth his son, and that it was not till she had been tempted many years after her marriage, that she had fallen; she implored my lord to believe this 'on the word of one for

whom earth and earth's objects were no more;' those were her words.

"Six months ago, when my lord lay on the bed from which he never rose, he called me to him, and said—'Wardour, you have always been the faithful servant of our house, and warmly attached to my second son; tell my poor boy, if ever you see him, that I did at last open my eyes to my error, and acknowledge him as my child; tell him that I have desired his brother, (who was then, Sir, kneeling by my lord's side), as he values my blessing, to seek him out and repair the wrong I have done him; and add, that my best comfort in death was the hope of his forgiveness.'"

"Did he, did he say *that?*" exclaimed Clarence, who had been violently agitated during the latter part of this recital, and now sprung from his seat—"My father, my father! would that I had borne with thee more—mine—mine

was the fault—from *him* should have come the forgiveness!"

The old steward sate silent and aghast. At that instant his wife entered, with a message of chiding at the lateness of the hour upon her lip, but she started back, when she saw Clarence's profile, as he stood leaning against the wall: "Good Heavens!" cried she, "is it, is it—yes, it is my young master, my own foster-son."

Rightly had Clarence conjectured, when he had shunned her presence. Years had, indeed, wrought a change in his figure and face: acquaintance, servant, friend, relation, the remembrance of his features had passed from all; but she who had nursed him as an infant on her lap, and fed him from her breast, she who had joined the devotion of clanship to the fondness of a mother, knew him at a glance.

"Yes," cried he, as he threw himself into

her withered and aged arms, "it is I, the child *you* reared, come, after many years, to find too late, when a father is no more, that he had a right to a father's home."

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAPTER VIII.

> "Let us go in,
> And charge us there upon interrogatories,
> And all will answer all things faithfully."
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"BUT did not any one recognize you in your change of name?" said the old foster mother, looking fondly upon Clarence, as he sate the next morning by her side. "How could any one forget so winsome a face who had once seen it?"

"You don't remember," said Clarence (as we will yet continue to call our hero), smiling, "that your husband had forgotten it."

"Ay, Sir," cried the piqued steward, "but that was because you wore your hat slouched over your eyes; if you had taken off *that*, I should have known you directly."

"However that may be," said Clarence, unwilling to dwell longer on an occurrence which he saw hurt the feelings of the kind Mr. Wardour, "it is very easy to explain how I preserved my incognito. You recollect that my father never suffered me to mix with my mother's guests: so that I had no chance of their remembering me, especially, as during the last three years and a half, no stranger had ever entered our walls. Add to this, that I was in the very time of life in which a few years work the greatest change, and on going to London, I was thrown entirely among people who could never have seen me before. Fortunately for me, I became acquainted with my mother's uncle—circumstances subsequently led me to disclose

my birth to him, upon a promise that he would never call me by any other name than that which I had assumed. He, who was the best, the kindest, the most generous of human beings, took a liking to me. He insisted not only upon his relationship to me, as my grand uncle, but upon the justice of repairing to me the wrongs his unhappy niece had caused me. The delicacy of his kindness—the ties of blood—and an accident which had enabled me to be of some service to him, all prevented my resisting the weight of obligation with which he afterwards oppressed me. He procured me an appointment abroad: I remained there four years. When I returned, I entered, it is true, into very general society; but four years had, as you may perceive, altered me greatly; and even had there previously existed any chance of my being recognized, that alteration would, probably, have been sufficient to ensure my secret."

"But your brother—my present lord—did you never meet him, Sir?"

"Often, my good mother; but you remember that I was little more than six years old when he left England, and when he next saw me I was about two and twenty: it would have been next to a miracle, or, at least, would have required the eyes of love like your's to have recalled me to memory after such an absence.

"Well—to return to my story—I succeeded, partly as his nearest relation, but principally from an affection dearer than blood, to the fortune of my real uncle, and adopted father. Fate prospered with me: I rose in the world's esteem and honour, and soon became prouder of my borrowed appellation, than of all the titles of my lordly line. Circumstances occurring within the last week, which it will be needless to relate, but which may have the greatest influence over my future life, made it necessary to

do what I had resolved I would never do—prove my identity and origin. Accordingly I came here to seek you."

"But why did not my honoured young master disclose himself last night?" asked the steward.

"I might say," answered Clarence, "because I anticipated great pleasure in a surprise; but I had another reason—it was this: I had heard of my poor father's death, and I was painfully anxious to learn if at the last he had testified any relenting towards me—and yet more so, to ascertain the manner of my unfortunate mother's fate. Both abroad and in England, I had sought tidings of her every where, but in vain: in mentioning my mother's retiring into a convent, you have explained the reason why my efforts were so fruitless. With these two objects in view, I thought myself more likely to learn the whole truth as a stranger than in my

proper person; for in the latter case I deemed it probable that your delicacy and kindness might tempt you to conceal whatever was calculated to wound my feelings, and to exaggerate any thing that might tend to flatter or to soothe them. Thank Heaven, I now learn that I have a right to the name my boyhood bore, that my birth is not branded with the foulest of private crimes, and that in death my father's heart yearned to his too hasty but repentant son. Enough of this—I have now only to request you, my friend, to accompany me, before day-break, on Wednesday morning, to a place several miles hence. Your presence there will be necessary, to substantiate the proof for which I came hither."

"With all my heart, Sir," cried the honest steward; "and after Wednesday you will, I trust, resume your rightful name?"

"Certainly," replied Clarence; "since nei-

ther I, nor the memory of him from whom I inherit it, have any longer a reason for shame at its possession."

Leaving Clarence now for a brief while to renew his acquaintance with the scenes of his childhood, and to offer the tribute of his filial tears to the ashes of a father whose injustice had been but "the stinging of a heart the world had stung"—we return to some old acquaintances in the various conduct of our drama.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Upon his couch the veil'd Mokanna lay."
The Veiled Prophet.

The autumn sun broke through an apartment in a villa in the neighbourhood of London, furnished with the most prodigal, yet not tasteless, attention to luxury and shew, within which, beside a table strewed with newspapers, letters, and accounts, lay Richard Crauford, extended carelessly upon a sofa, which might almost have contented the Sybarite, who quarrelled with a rose leaf. At his elbow was a bottle half emptied, and a wine glass just filled. An expression of triumph and enjoyment was

visible upon his handsome, but usually inexpressive countenance.

"Well," said he, taking up a newspaper, "let us read this paragraph again. What a beautiful sensation it is to see one's name in print —'We understand that Richard Crauford, Esq. M. P. for ——, is to be raised to the dignity of the peerage. There does not, perhaps, exist in the country a gentleman more universally beloved and esteemed' — (mark that, Dicky Crauford) —'The invariable generosity with which his immense wealth has been employed—his high professional honour—the undeviating and consistent integrity of his political career'—(Ay, to be sure, it is only your honest fools who are inconsistent: no man can deviate who has one firm principle, self-interest*)—'his manly and energetic attention to the welfare

* Singular confusion of terms! Self-interest was also the pervading principle of Mordaunt's philosophy!

of religion' (he—he—he !), 'conjoined to a fortune almost incalculable, render this condescension of our gracious sovereign no less judicious than deserved! We hear that the title proposed for the new peer is that of Viscount Innisdale, which, we believe, was formerly in the noble family of which Mr. Crauford is a distant branch.'

"He! he! he! Bravo! bravo! Viscount Innisdale!—noble family—distant branch—the devil I am! What an ignoramus my father was, not to know that! Why, rest his soul, he never knew who his grandfather was; but the world shall not be equally ignorant of that important point. Let me see, who shall be Viscount Innisdale's great-grandfather? Well, well, whoever he is, here's long life to his great-grandson! 'Incalculable fortune!' Ay, ay, I hope, at all events, it will never be calculated. But now for my letters. Bah—this wine is a

thought too acid for the cellars of Viscount Innisdale! What, another from Mother H——! Dark eyes, small mouth—sings like an angel—eighteen! Pish! I am too old for such follies now; 'tis not pretty for Viscount Innisdale. Humph!—Lisbon—seven hundred pounds, five shillings and seven-pence—halfpenny, is it, or farthing? I must note that down. Loan for King of Prussia. Well, must negociate that to-morrow. Ah, Hockit, the wine-merchant—pipe of claret in the docks—vintage of 17—. Bravo! all goes smooth for Viscount Innisdale! Pish!—from my damnable wife! What a pill for my lordship! What says she?

"'*Dawlish, Devonshire.*

You have not, my dearest Richard, answered my letters for months. I do not, however, presume to complain of your silence:

I know well that you have a great deal to occupy your time, both in business and pleasure. But one little line, dear Richard—one little line, surely, that is not too much now and then. I am most truly sorry to trouble you again about money; and you must know that I strive to be as saving as possible;'—[Pish!—curse the woman—sent her twenty pounds three months ago!]—' but I really am so distressed, and the people here are so pressing; and, at all events, I cannot bear the thought of your wife being disgraced. Pray, forgive me, Richard, and believe how painful it is in me to say so much. I know you will answer this; and, oh, do, do tell me how you are.

"' Ever your affectionate wife,

"' CAROLINE CRAUFORD.'

"Was there ever poor man so plagued? Where's my note-book? Mem.—Send Car. to-

morrow £20, to last her the rest of the year. Mem.—Send Mother H—— £500. Mem.—Pay Hockit's bill, £830. Bless me, what shall I do with Viscountess Innisdale. Now, if I were not married, I would be son-in-law to a duke. Mem.—Go down to Dawlish, and see if she won't die soon. Healthy situation, I fear—devilish unlucky—must be changed. Mem.—Swamps in Essex. Who's that?"

A knock at the door disturbed Mr. Crauford in his meditations. He started up, hurried the bottle and glass under the sofa, where the descending drapery completely hid them; and, taking up a newspaper, said in a gentle tone, "Come in." A small, thin man, bowing at every step, entered.

"Ah! Bradley, is it you, my good fellow," said Crauford—"glad to see you—a fine morning; but what brings you from town so early?"

"Why, Sir," answered Mr. Bradley, very obsequiously, "something unpleasant has—"

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Crauford, blanched into the whiteness of death, and starting up from the sofa with a violence which frightened the timid Mr. Bradley to the other end of the room—"the counting house—the books—all safe?"

"Yes, Sir, yes, *at present*—but—"

"But what, man?"

"Why, honoured Sir," resumed Mr. Bradley, bowing to the ground, "your partner, Mr. Jessopp, has been very inquisitive about the accounts. He says, Mr. Da Costa, the Spanish merchant, has been insinuating very unpleasant hints, and that he must have a conversation with you at your earliest convenience; and when, Sir, I ventured to remonstrate about the unreasonableness of attending to what Mr. Da Costa said, Mr. Jessopp was quite abusive

and declared that there seemed some very mysterious communication between you (begging your pardon, Sir,) and me, and that he did not know what business I, who had no share in the firm, had to interfere."

"But," said Crauford, "you were civil to him—did not reply hotly—eh—my good Bradley!"

"Lord forbid, Sir—Lord forbid, that I should not know my place better, or that I should give an unbecoming word to the partner of my honoured benefactor. But, Sir, if I dare venture to say so, I think Mr. Jessopp is a little jealous, or so, of you; he seemed quite in a passion at a paragraph in the paper, about my honoured master's becoming a lord."

"Right, honest Bradley, right: he is jealous—we must soothe him. Go, my good fellow—go to him with my compliments, and say, that I will be with him by one. Never fear, this business will be easily settled."

And bowing himself out of the room, Bradley withdrew.

Left alone, a dark cloud gathered over the brow of Mr. Crauford.

"I am on a precipice," thought he; "but if my own brain does not turn giddy with the prospect, all yet may be safe. Cruel necessity, that obliged me to admit another into the business, that foiled me of Mordaunt, and drove me upon this fawning rascal. So, so—I almost think there is a Providence, now that Mordaunt has grown rich; but then his wife died—ay—ay—God saved him, but the devil killed her.* He—he—he! But, seriously—seriously, there is danger in the very air I breathe. I must away to that envious Jessopp instantly; but first let me finish the bottle."

* Voltaire.—"Dieu a puni ce fripon, le diable a noyé les autres."—*Candide.*

CHAPTER IX.

"A strange harmonious inclination
Of all degrees to reformation."

Hudibras.

About seven miles from W——, on the main road from ——, there was in 17— a solitary public-house, which, by the by, is now a magnificent hotel. Like many of its brethren in the more courtly vicinity of the metropolis, this *amœnum hospitium peregrinæ gentis*, then had its peculiar renown for certain dainties of the palate; and various in degree and character were the numerous parties from the neighbouring

towns and farms, which, upon every legitimate holiday were wont to assemble at the mansion of mine host of "the Jolly Angler," in order to feast upon eel-pie, and grow merry over the true Herefordshire cyder.

But upon that especial day on which we are about to introduce our reader into the narrow confines of its common parlour, the said hostel was crowded with persons of a very different description from the peaceable idlers who were ordinarily wont to empty mine host's larder, and forget the price of corn over the divine inspirations of pomarial nectar. Instead of the indolent, satisfied air of the saturnalian merry-maker, the vagrant angler, or the gentleman farmer, with his comely dame who "walked in silk attire, and siller had to spare;" instead of the quiet yet glad countenances of such hunters of pleasure and eaters of eel-pie, or the more obstreperous joy of urchins let loose from

school to taste some brief and perennial recreation, and mine host's delicacies at the same time; instead of these, the little parlour presented a various and perturbed group, upon whose features neither eel-pie nor Herefordshire cyder had wrought the relaxation of a holiday, or the serenity of a momentary content.

The day to which we now refer, was the one immediately preceding that appointed for the far-famed meeting at W——; and many of the patriots, false or real, who journied from a distance to attend that rendezvous, had halted at our host's of the Jolly Angler; both as being within a convenient space from the appointed spot, and as a tabernacle where promiscuous intrusion, and (haply) immoderate charges were less likely to occur than at the bustling and somewhat extortionary hotels and inns of the town of W——.

The times in which this meeting was held,

were those of great popular excitement and discontent; and the purport of the meeting proposed, was to petition Parliament against the continuance of the American war, and the king against the continuance of his ministers. Placards of an unusually inflammatory and imprudent nature, had given great alarm to the more sober and well disposed persons in the neighbourhood of W——; and so much fear was felt or assumed upon the occasion, that a new detachment of Lord Ulswater's regiment had been especially ordered into the town; and it was generally rumoured that the legal authorities would interfere, even by force, for the dispersion of the meeting in question. These circumstances had given the measure a degree of general and anxious interest which it would not otherwise have excited; and while every body talked of the danger of attending the assembly, every body resolved to thrust himself into it.

It was about the goodly hour of noon, and the persons assembled were six in number, all members of the most violent party, and generally considered by friend and foe as embracers of republican tenets. One of these, a little, oily, corpulent personage, would have appeared far too sleek and well fed for a disturber of things existing, had not a freckled, pimpled, and fiery face, a knit brow, and a small black eye of intolerable fierceness, belied the steady and contented appearance of his frame and girth. This gentleman, by name Christopher Culpepper, spoke in a quick, muffled, shuffling sort of tone, like the pace of a Welsh pony, somewhat lame, perfectly broken-winded, but an exemplary ambler for all that.

Next to him sate, with hands clasped over his knees, a thin, small man, with a countenance prematurely wrinkled, and an air of great dejection. Poor Castleton! his had been, indeed,

the bitter lot of a man, honest but weak, who attaches himself, heart and soul, to a public cause which, in his life, at least, is hopeless. Three other men were sitting by the open window, disputing, with the most vehement gestures, upon the character of Wilkes; and at the other window, alone, silent, and absorbed, sat a man whose appearance and features were singularly calculated to arrest and to concentrate attention. His raven hair, grizzled with the first advance of age, still preserved its strong, wiry curl, and luxuriant thickness. His brows, large, bushy, and indicative of great determination, met over eyes which, at that moment, were fixed upon vacancy with a look of thought and calmness very unusual to their ordinary restless and rapid glances. His mouth, that great seat of character, was firmly and obstinately shut; and though, at the first observation, its downward curve and iron severity wore

the appearance of unmitigated harshness, disdain, and resolve, yet a more attentive deducer of signs from features would not have been able to detect in its expression any thing resembling selfishness or sensuality, and in that absence would have found sufficient to redeem the more repellant indications of mind which it betrayed.

Presently the door was opened, and the landlord, making some apology to both parties for having no other apartment unoccupied, introduced a personage whose dress and air, as well as a kind of saddle-bag, which he would not entrust to any other bearer than himself, appeared to denotè him as one rather addicted to mercantile than political speculations. Certainly he did not seem too much at home among the patriotic reformers, who, having glared upon him for a single moment, renewed, without remark, their several attitudes or occupations.

The stranger, after a brief pause, approached

the solitary reformer whom we last described; and making a salutation, half timorous and half familiar, thus accosted him—

"Your servant, Mr. Wolfe, your servant. I think I had the pleasure of hearing you a long time ago at the Westminster election: very eloquent you were, Sir, very!"

Wolfe looked up for an instant at the face of the speaker, and, not recognizing it, turned abruptly away, threw open the window, and, leaning out, appeared desirous of escaping from all further intrusion on the part of the stranger: but that gentleman was by no means of a nature easily abashed.

"Fine day, Sir, for the time of year—very fine day, indeed. October is a charming month, as my lamented friend and customer, the late Lady Waddilove, was accustomed to say. Talking of that, Sir, as the winter is now approaching, do you not think it would be

prudent, Mr. Wolfe, to provide yourself with an umbrella? I have an admirable one which I might dispose of: it is from the effects of the late Lady Waddilove. 'Brown,' said her ladyship, a short time before her death—'Brown, you are a good creature; but you ask too much for the Dresden vase. We have known each other a long time—you must take fourteen pounds ten shillings, and you may have that umbrella, in the corner, into the bargain.' Mr. Wolfe, the bargain was completed, and the umbrella became mine—it may now be yours."

And so saying, Mr. Brown, depositing his saddle-bag on the ground, proceeded to unfold an umbrella of singular antiquity and form. A very long stick, tipped with ivory, being surmounted with about a quarter of a yard of sea-green silk, somewhat discoloured by time and wear.

"It is a beautiful article, Sir," said Mr. Brown, admiringly surveying it—"is it not?"

"Pshaw!" said Wolfe, impatiently—"what have I to do with your goods and chattels—go and palm the cheatings and impositions of your pitiful trade upon some easier gull."

"Cheating and impositions, Mr. Wolfe!" cried the slandered Brown, perfectly aghast:—"I would have you to know, Sir, that I have served the first families in the country, ay, and in this county too, and never had such words applied to me before. Sir, there was the late Lady Waddilove, and the respected Mrs. Minden *and her nephew, the ambassador*, and the Duchess of Pugadale, and Mr. Mordaunt, of Mordaunt Court, poor gentleman—though he is poor no more," and Mr. Brown proceeded to enumerate the long list of his customers.

Now, we have stated that Wolfe, though he had never known the rank of Mordaunt, was

acquainted with his real name; and, as the sound caught his ear, he muttered—"Mordaunt—Mordaunt—ay, but not my former acquaintance—not him who was called Glendower. No, no—the man cannot mean him."

"Yes, Sir, but I do mean him," cried Brown, in a rage. "I do mean that Mr. Glendower, who afterwards took another name, but whose real appellation is Mr. Algernon Mordaunt, of Mordaunt Court, in this county, Sir."

"What description of man is he?" said Wolfe; "rather tall, slender, with an air and mien like a king's, I was going to say—but better than a king's—like a free man's?"

"Ay, ay,—the same," answered Mr. Brown, sullenly; "but why should I tell you—'cheating and imposition,' indeed!—I am sure my word can be of no avail to you—and I sha'nt' stay here any longer to be insulted, Mr. Wolfe—which, I am sure, talking of freemen, no free-

man ought to submit to; but, as the late Lady Waddilove once very wisely said to me, 'Brown, never have any thing to do with those republicans, they are the worst tyrants of all.' Good morning, Mr. Wolfe—gentlemen, your servant—'cheating and imposition,' indeed!"—and Mr. Brown banged the door as he departed.

"Wolfe," said Mr. Christopher Culpepper, "who is that man?"

"I know not," answered the republican, laconically, and gazing on the ground, apparently in thought.

"He has the air of a slave," quoth the free Culpepper, "and slaves cannot bear the company of freemen; therefore he did right to go—whe—w!—Had we a proper, and thorough, and efficient reform, human nature would not be thus debased by trades, and callings, and barters, and exchange, for all professions are injurious to the character and the dignity of man—

whe—w!—but, as I shall prove upon the hustings to-morrow, it is in vain to hope for any amendment in the wretched state of things, until the people of these realms are fully, freely, and fairly represented—whe—w!—Gentlemen, it is past two, and we have not ordered dinner—whe—w!"—(N.B. this ejaculation denotes the kind of snuffle which lent peculiar energy to the dicta of Mr. Culpepper.)

"Ring the bell then, and summon the landlord," said, very pertinently, one of the three disputants upon the character of Wilkes.

The landlord appeared; dinner was ordered.

"Pray," said Wolfe, "has that man, Mr. Brown, I think he called himself, left the inn?"

"He has, Sir, for he was mightily offended at something which—"

"And how far," interrupted Wolfe, "from hence does Mr. Mordaunt live?"

"About five miles on the other side of W——," answered mine host.

Wolfe rose, seized his hat, and was about to depart.

"Stay, stay," cried citizen Christopher Culpepper; "you will not leave us till after dinner?"

"I shall dine at W——," answered Wolfe, quitting the room.

"Then our reckoning will be heavier," said Culpepper. "It is not handsome in Wolfe to leave us—whe—w!—Really I think that our brother in the great cause has of late relaxed in his attentions and zeal to the goddess of our devotions—whe—w!"

"It is human nature!" cried one of the three disputants upon the character of Wilkes.

"It is not human nature!" cried the second disputant, folding his arms doggedly, in preparation for a discussion.

"Contemptible human nature!" exclaimed the third disputant, soliloquizing with a supercilious expression of hateful disdain.

"Poor human nature!" murmured Castleton, looking upward with a sigh; and though we have not given to that gentleman other words than these, we think they are almost sufficient to let our readers into his character.

CHAPTER X.

> "Silvis, ubi passim
> Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,
> Ille sinistrorsum hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
> Error, sed variis illudit partibus."
>
> HORAT.

As Wolfe strode away from the inn, he muttered to himself—

"Can it be that Mordaunt has suddenly grown rich? If so, I rejoice at it. True, that he was not for our cause, but he had the spirit and the heart which belonged to it. Had he not been bred among the prejudices of birth, or had he lived in stormier times, he might have been

the foremost champion of freedom. As it is, I rather lament than condemn. Yet I would fain see him once more. Perhaps prosperity may have altered his philosophy. But can he, indeed, be the same Mordaunt of whom that trading itinerant spoke? Can he have risen to the pernicious eminence of a landed aristocrat? Well, it is worth the journey; for if he have power in the neighbourhood, I am certain that he will exert it for our protection; and at the worst, I shall escape from the idle words of my compatriots. Oh! if it were possible that the advocates could debase the glory of the cause, how long since should I have flinched from the hardship and the service to which my life is devoted! Self-interest, Envy, that snarls at all above it, without even the beast's courage to bite—Folly, that knows not the substance of freedom, but loves the glitter of its name—Fear, that falters —Crime, that seeks in licentiousness an excuse—

Disappointment, only craving occasion to rail—Hatred—Sourness, boasting of zeal, but only venting the blackness of rancour and evil passion — all these make our adherents, and give our foes the handle and the privilege to scorn and to despise. But man chooses the object, and Fate only furnishes the tools. Happy for our posterity, that when the object is once gained, the frailty of the tools will be no more!"

Thus soliloquizing, the republican walked rapidly onwards, till a turn of the road brought before his eye the form of Mr. Brown, seated upon a little rough pony, and "whistling as he went, for want of thought."

Wolfe quickened his pace, and soon overtook him.

"You must forgive me, my good man," said he, soothingly; "I meant not to impeach your honesty or your calling. Perhaps I was hasty

and peevish; and, in sad earnest, I have much to teaze and distract me."

"Well, Sir, well," answered Mr. Brown, greatly mollified: "I am sure no Christian can be more forgiving than I am; and since you are sorry for what you were pleased to say, let us think no more about it. But touching the umbrella, Mr. Wolfe—have you a mind for that interesting and useful relic of the late Lady Waddilove?"

"Not at present, I thank you," said Wolfe, mildly: "I care little for the inclemencies of the heavens, and you may find many to whom your proffered defence from them may be more acceptable. But tell me if the Mr. Mordaunt you mentioned was ever residing in town, and in very indifferent circumstances?"

"Probably he was," said the cautious Brown, who, as we before said, had been bribed into

silence, and who now grievously repented that passion had betrayed him into the imprudence of candour; "but I really do not busy myself about other people's affairs. 'Brown,' said the late Lady Waddilove to me—'Brown, you are a good creature, and never talk of what does not concern you.' Those, Mr. Wolfe, were her ladyship's own words!"

"As you please," said the reformer, who did not want shrewdness, and saw that his point was already sufficiently gained; "as you please. And now, to change the subject, I suppose we shall have your attendance at the meeting at W—— to-morrow?"

"Ay," replied the worthy Brown; "I thought it likely I should meet many of my old customers in the town on such a busy occasion; so I went a little out of my way home to London, in order to spend a night or two there. Indeed, I have some valuable articles for Mr.

Glumford, the magistrate, who will be in attendance to-morrow."

"They say," observed Wolfe, "that the magistrates, against all law, right, and custom, will dare to interfere with, and resist the meeting. Think you report says true?"

"Nay," returned Brown, prudently, "I cannot exactly pretend to decide the question: all I know is, that Squire Glumford said to me, at his own house, five days ago, as he was drawing on his boots — 'Brown,' said he 'Brown, mark my words, we shall do for those rebellious dogs!'"

"Did he say so?" muttered Wolfe between his teeth. "Oh, for the old times, or those yet to come, when our answer would have been, or shall be—the sword!"

"And you know," pursued Mr. Brown, "that Lord Ulswater and his regiment are in the town, and have even made great preparations against the meeting a week ago."

"I *have* heard this," said Wolfe; "but I cannot think that any body of armed men dare interrupt or attack a convocation of peaceable subjects, met solely to petition parliament against famine for themselves and slavery for their children."

"Famine!" quoth Mr. Brown. "Indeed it is very true—very!—times are dreadfully bad. I can scarcely get my own living—parliament certainly ought to do something; but you must forgive me, Mr. Wolfe: it may be dangerous to talk with you on these matters; and, now I think of it, the sooner I get to W—— the better—good morning—a shower's coming on—you won't have the umbrella then?"

"They dare not," said Wolfe to himself, "no, no — they dare not attack us — they dare not;" and clenching his fist, he pursued, with a quicker step, and a more erect mien, his solitary way.

When he was about the distance of three miles from W——, he was overtaken by a middle aged man, of a frank air and a respectable appearance. "Good day, Sir," said he; "we seem to be journeying the same way —will it be against your wishes to join company?"

Wolfe assented, and the stranger resumed:

"I suppose, Sir, you intend to be present at the meeting at W—— to-morrow. There will be an immense concourse, and the entrance of a new detachment of soldiers, and the various reports of the likelihood of their interference with the assembly, make it an object of some interest and anxiety to look forward to."

"True—true," said Wolfe, slowly, eyeing his new acquaintance with a deliberate and scrutinizing attention. "It will, indeed, be interesting to see how far an evil and hardy government will venture to incroach upon the

rights of the people, which it ruins while it pretends to rule."

"Of a truth," rejoined the other, "I rejoice that I am no politician. I believe my spirit is as free as any cooped in the narrow dungeon of earth's clay can well be; yet I confess that it has drawn none of its liberty from book, pamphlet, speech, or newspaper, of modern times."

"So much the worse for you, Sir," said Wolfe, sourly: "the man who has health and education can find no excuse for supineness or indifference to that form of legislation by which his country decays or prospers."

"Why," said the other, gaily, "I willingly confess myself less of a patriot than a philosopher; and as long as I am harmless, I strive very little to be useful, in a public capacity; in a private one, as a father, a hus-

band, and a neighbour, I trust I am not utterly without my value."

"Pish!" cried Wolfe; "let no man who forgets his public duties, prate of his private merits. I tell you, man, that he who can advance by a single hair's-breadth the happiness or the freedom of mankind, has done more to save his own soul, than if he had paced every step in the narrow circle of his domestic life with the regularity of clockwork."

"You may be right," quoth the stranger, carelessly; "but I look on things in the mass, and perhaps see only the superficies, while you, I perceive already, are a lover of the abstract. For my part, old Harry Fielding's two definitions seem to me as good for the present day as they were for the past. 'Patriot—a candidate for a place!' 'Politics—the art of getting such a place!' Perhaps, Sir, as you seem a

man of education, you remember the words of our great novelist."

"No!" answered Wolfe, a little contemptuously—"I cannot say that I burthen my memory with the deleterious witticisms and shallow remarks of writers of fancy. It has been a mighty and spreading evil to the world, that the vain fictions of the poets, or the exaggerations of novelists have been hitherto so welcomed and extolled. Better had it been for us if the destruction of the lettered wealth at Alexandria had included all the lighter works which have floated, from their very levity, down the stream of time, an example and a corruption to the degraded geniuses of later days."

The eyes of the stranger sparkled. "Why, you outgoth the Goth!" exclaimed he, sharply. "But you surely preach against what you have not studied. Confess that you are but slightly acquainted with Shakspeare, and Spenser, and

noble Dan Chaucer. Ay, if you knew them as well as I do, you would, like me, give

> " 'To hem faith and full credènce,
> And in your heart have hem in reverènce.' "

"Pish!" again muttered Wolfe; and then rejoined aloud, "It grieves me to see time so wasted, and judgment so perverted, as yours appear to have been; but it fills me with pity and surprise, as well as grief, to find, that so far from shame at the effeminacy of your studies, you appear to glory and exult in them."

"May the Lord help me and lighten thee," said Cole—(as we hope, for the sake of our accuracy in portraiture, our reader has already discovered the stranger to be.) "You are at least not a novelty in human wisdom, whatever you may be in character; for you are far from the only one proud of being ignorant, and pitying those who are not so."

Wolfe darted one of his looks of fire at the speaker, who, nothing abashed, met the glance with an eye, if not as fiery, at least as bold.

"I see," said the republican, "that we shall not agree upon the topics you have started. If you still intrude your society upon me, you will, at least, choose some other subject of conversation."

"Pardon me," said Cole, whose very studies, while they had excited, in their self-defence, his momentary warmth, made him habitually courteous and urbane—"pardon me for my hastiness of expression. I own myself in fault." And, with this apology, our ex-king slid into the new topics which the scenery and the weather afforded him.

Wolfe, bent upon the object of his present mission, made some inquiries respecting Mordaunt; and though Cole only shared the uncertain information of the country gossips,

as to the past history of that person, yet the little he did know was sufficient to confirm the republican in his belief of Algernon's identity; while the ex-gipsy's account of his rank and reputation in the country, made Wolfe doubly anxious to secure, if possible, his good offices and interference on behalf of the meeting. But the conversation was not always restricted to neutral and indifferent ground, but, ever and anon, wandered into various allusions or opinions, from the one, certain to beget retort or controversy in the other.

Had we time, and our reader patience, it would have been a rare and a fine contrast to have noted more at large the differences of thought and opinion between the companions; each in his several way so ardent for liberty, and so impatient of the controul and customs of society; each so enthusiastic for the same object, yet so coldly contemptuous to the enthu-

siasm of the other. The one guided only by his poetical and erratic tastes, the other solely by dreams, seeming to the world no less baseless, yet, to his own mind, bearing the name of stern judgment and inflexible truth. Both men of active and adventurous spirits, to whom forms were fetters, and ceremonies odious; yet deriving from that mutual similarity only pity for mutual perversion, they were memorable instances of the great differences congeniality itself will occasion, and of the never-ending varieties which minds, rather under the influence of imagination than judgment, will create.

Nor would it have been uninteresting, had we dived more deeply into the several educations of their lives, to have unravelled those differences, connected those similarities, and traced each to the circumstances, minute in appearance, yet mighty in effect, by which the philanthropist

must hope, and the moralist calculate, that all characters have hitherto been formed, and shall hereafter be amended. We are aware that our jovial Ægyptian will be the greater favourite in any comparison between himself and the republican; yet we cannot help pausing to observe, that whatever the failings of the latter, he had been guided throughout life by a principle which, if mistaken, was, at least, inflexible; while the other had obeyed only an alternate impulse and indolence, selfish in their cause, though, perhaps, innocent in their effect.

I know not, therefore, if we *envy* our lover of poetry the most, whether we ought not, even in our condemnation of his errors, to give the palm of *approbation* to the self-sacrificing, if self-deceiving, worshipper of truth.

CHAPTER XI.

" Gratis anhelans, multa agendo, nihil agens."
PHÆDRUS.

UPON entering the town, the streets displayed all the bustle and excitement which the approaching meeting was eminently calculated to create in a place ordinarily quiescent and undisturbed; groups of men were scattered in different parts, conversing with great eagerness; while, here and there, some Demosthenes of the town, impatient of the coming strife, was haranguing his little knot of admiring friends,

and preparing his oratorical organs by petty skirmishing for the grand battle of the morrow. Now and then the eye roved upon the gaunt forms of Lord Ulswater's troopers, as they strolled idly along the streets, in pairs, perfectly uninterested by the great event which set all the more peaceable inmates of the town in a ferment, and returning with a slighting and supercilious glance, the angry looks and muttered anathemas which, ever and anon, the hardier spirits of the petitioning party liberally bestowed upon them.

As Wolfe and his comrade entered the main-street, the former was accosted by some one of his compatriots, who, seizing him by the arm, was about to apprise the neighbouring idlers, by a sudden exclamation, of the welcome entrance of the eloquent and noted republican. But Wolfe perceived, and thwarted his design.

"Hush!" said he, in a low voice; "I am

only now on my way to an old friend, who seems a man of influence in these parts, and may be of avail to us on the morrow; keep silence, therefore, with regard to my coming till I return. I would not have my errand interrupted."

"As you will," said the brother spirit; "but who have you here — a fellow labourer?" and the reformer pointed to Cole, who, with an expression of shrewd humour, blended with a sort of philosophical compassion, stood at a little distance waiting for Wolfe, and eyeing the motley groups assembled before him."

"No," answered Wolfe; "he is some vain and idle sower of unprofitable flowers; one of those useless things who love poetry, and, for aught I know, write it; but that reminds me that I must rid myself of his company; yet, stay—do you know this neighbourhood sufficiently to serve me as a guide?"

"Ay," quoth the other; "I was born within three miles of the town."

"Indeed!" rejoined Wolfe; "then, perhaps, you can tell me if there is any way of reaching a place called Mordaunt Court, without passing through the more public and crowded thoroughfares of the town."

"To be sure," rejoined the brother-spirit; "you have only to turn to the right up yon hill, and you will in an instant be out of the purlieus and precincts of W——, and on your shortest road to Mordaunt Court; but surely it is not to its owner that you are bound?"

"And why not?" said Wolfe.

"Because," replied the other, "he is the wealthiest, the highest, and, as report says, the haughtiest aristocrat of these parts."

"So much the better, then," said Wolfe, "can he aid us in obtaining a quiet hearing to-morrow, undisturbed by those liveried varlets of

hire, who are termed, in sooth, Britain's defence. Much better, when we think of all they cost us to pamper and to clothe, should they be termed Britain's ruin; but, farewell, for the present; we shall meet to night; your lodgings——"

"Yonder," said the other, pointing to a small inn opposite; and Wolfe, nodding his adieu, returned to Cole, whose vivacious and restless nature had already made him impatient of his companion's delay.

"I must take my leave of you now," said Wolfe, "which I do with a hearty exhortation, that you will change your studies, fit only for effeminate and enslaved minds."

"And I return the exhortation," answered Cole. "Your studies seem to me tenfold more crippling than mine: mine take all this earth's restraint from me, and yours seem only to remind you that all earth *is* restraint: mine shew me whatever worlds the fondest fancy could

desire; yours only the follies and chains of this. In short, while 'my mind to me a *kingdom* is,' yours to you is nothing but a great meeting for the purpose of abusing ministers and demanding reform."

Not too well pleased by this answer, and at the same time indisposed for the delay of further reply, Wolfe contented himself with an iron sneer of disdain, and, turning on his heel, strode rapidly away in the direction his friend had indicated.

Meanwhile, Cole followed him with his eye, till he was out of sight, and then muttered to himself—"Never was there a fitter addition to old Barclay's 'Ship of Fools!' I should not wonder if this man's patriotism leads him from despising the legislature into breaking the law; and, faith, the surest way to the gallows is less through vice than discontent; yet, I would fain hope better things for him—for, methinks, he

is neither a common declaimer, nor an ordinary man."

With these words the honest Cole turned away, and, strolling towards the Golden Fleece, soon found himself in the hospitable mansion of Mistress and Mister Merrylack.

CHAPTER XII.

"Thus with himself communion held he."
Corsair.

"THOSE soliloquizing gentlemen are the frankest, best hearted people in the world!" So, dear reader, says some critic, who, we forget; but it is no matter: we have only thrust in the remark by the head and shoulders, in order to make one observation about *our* soliloquies. We know not whether thou hast noted the frequent use we have made of those monologues in this invaluable history—still less do we know if

we ought to apologize to thee for the same ; if so, how can we hope for thy forgiveness, when we assure thee that the fault is by no means the result of thoughtlessness, or inattention, but, on the contrary, that it proceeds from the most deliberate and wilful design ; for, to us, the soliloquy doth appear not only the most inestimable privilege, but the noblest difficulty of our art —that art to which are given the mines of the inner world, no less than the external surfaces of the palpable and trodden earth. In other places—in action, and in dialogue—we have to trace the outward effects of the great elements of the soul :—we have, in the soliloquy, to examine them in their home. In the other components of the novel, we study mankind—in the soliloquy we study man :—we have his heart before us, and we survey its kingdom as in a map ; nor is it an easy task to sustain, internally, as it were, the peculiarities and distinctions of

outward character, or to preserve, in the embryo thought, the exact and natural likeness of the after action. It is, however, only by struggling with this difficulty that we can hope to impart the last finish to our creations, or even to breathe into the tame and mere machine, the animation of a living soul.

Let us then obtain forgiveness for our use of the soliloquy, nor find too severe a censure, if we have often, like the industrious Milesian, only been *successful in failure.* All around the heart is a darkness but partially relieved, and even when we insert, as it were, a window in the breast, the faint glimmering within, while it arrests our attention, excites rather than gratifies our conjectures.

The Night was already stealing over earth and heaven, and star flashing forth upon star, began to light up the jubilee of her royal state. Beside the casement of his apartment, left open to admit the freshening air to a brow on which

fever seldom slept, Mordaunt sate alone, and, leaning his cheek upon his hand, looked musingly out upon the beauty of the night. Before him, to the right, stretched the sloping and gradual descent, on which the giant trees stood in thick ranks against the blue skies, proud and dark, like the Titan host of old,—still with the strength and growth of ages, and lifting brows which no time had sufficed to scathe, in defiance to the starry camps of Heaven! But immediately below his window, the scents and freshness of flowers and herbs, which the autumn had not yet utterly withered, came upward, and the air wandering over them, stole, like a bee, their perfumes as it wandered!

To the left the trees were more scattered and irregular; and there three fountains, which modern taste had spared to former splendour, though concealed from sight by flowering shrubs and luxuriant evergreens, made a mingled music

well suiting with the character of the night, and which, (to those who dream over the golden legends of yore,) might have seemed the melancholy voices of their guardian spirits! From a neighbouring copse, in front of the window, stalked a solitary deer, and, grown bold by the universal quiet, approached to graze beneath the very walls of the house; while, afar off, his grouped comrades might be seen on the hill, as the moon, just risen, bathed the sward in its broad, still, stream of light, waving their antlers in wild grace, and gliding slowly down the ascent towards the stream which brawled below, till, by little and little, they disappeared.

To us, deer have been companions from childhood, and they are still, for our taste, more cherished and welcome objects than all other "flocks, or herds, or (even the) human face divine!" Their free and wandering life—their

beautiful and stately forms—their couch in the fern—their tent in the forest shade—and, more than all, the boyish memories which associate them with ancient song of blithe hunter or gallant outlaw—all united, invest them with an interest and a charm which are among the few relics of poesy and romance that much reality and some care have yet left to us!

Fondly and full of thought Mordaunt surveyed the scene before him.—"Beautiful Night!" said he. "What are the day and the gaudy sun to thee! Stars, shade, stillness, it is in you that the heart hoards its dearest and holiest treasures of memory and thought! With you they are dormant through the common and garish day—with you they awaken to consecrate the hour when nothing is around us but our dreams! Oh, that in the madness of those dreams there was more a method. We are told that the mind has worked

out, from its strong and breathing fancies, shapes which do picture the dead, so that it has been deceived by its own phantasma, and clasped the visions of the over-heated brain for the very substance of a fearful truth; and hence have been traced to a natural origin the forms and spectral things which the living have deemed shadows from the grave!

"But if it be thus, wherefore come not even those mockeries of our senses unto me? Have not my thoughts for ever and for ever sate brooding upon the teeming and fertile past, and dreamt, to delirium, over all that time and the harsh tomb have snatched from my grasp! Have I not called unto the wandering air, and the mystic night? Have I not for days made myself exempt from nature's food, and fasted upon fiery hopes and unearthly desires? Have I not held vigil upon vigil till the eye seemed parched and shrivelling from the unnatural want

of the dews of sleep? And then, when the soul was literally wearing itself away from this shroud of flesh, and so growing fit for a kindred commune, have I not invoked, and prayed, and knelt, and sent a voice of agony and wöe unto the land of spirits, and heard no echo in return? —none! All—even thy love, my lost, my unforgotten—thy love, which once seemed to me eternal—all was silence, darkness, death! My heart looked from this world unto the world of dreams, and in vain: there, as here, a pilgrim in a peopleless desert, girt with a heavy and burning air, and sinking beneath the palpable weight, and dread, and horror of an eternal loneliness!

"But this is more than idle.—Beautiful Night! with thy balm and softness, and thy maternal love spreading over this troubled earth with a deep and still sanctity—and you, fresh-breathing winds, and fragrant herbs and grass, and

matted trees, which the sun never pierces, and where a vague spirit moving calls, as a tribute, tenderness from meditation, and poetry from thought—forgive me, for I have wronged you. It is from you that the dead speak, and their whispered and sweet voices have tidings of consolation and joy—it is you, and the murmur of the waters, and the humming stillness of noon, and the melodious stars, which have tones for the heart, not ear, and whatever in the living lyres of the universe have harmony and intelligence—it is you, all of you, that are the organs of a love which has only escaped from clay to blend itself with the great elements, and become with them, creating and universal! O beautiful and soothing mystery of nature, that while the spirit quits the earth, the robes which on earth it wore remain to hallow this world to the survivors! remain not only to moulder and decay, but to revive, to remingle with the life around, and to

give, even in the imperishability of matter, a type of the immortal essence of the soul!"

From this reverie Mordaunt was awakened, by the entrance of his attendant—"A man, apparently of the better classes, desired to see him upon urgent business."

The claim was allowed, and the stranger admitted. That stranger (we need hardly add) was Wolfe; and the result of the conference which ensued was a determination on the part of Mordaunt to repair immediately to W——.

CHAPTER IX.

"The commons here in Kent are up in arms."

2nd Part of Henry VI.

When Mordaunt arrived at W——, he found that the provincial deities (who were all assembled at dinner with the principal inhabitants of the town), in whose hands the fate of the meeting was placed, were in great doubt and grievous consternation. He came in time, first to balance the votes, and ultimately to decide them. His mind, prudent and acute, when turned to worldly affairs, saw in a glance the harmless,

though noisy nature of the meeting ; and he felt that the worst course the government or the county could pursue would be to raise into importance, by violence, what otherwise would meet with ridicule from most, and indifference from the rest.

His large estates, his ancient name, his high reputation for talent, his well known loyalty, joined to that manner, half eloquent and half commanding, which rarely fails of effect when deliberation only requires a straw on either side to become decision—all these rendered his interference of immediate avail ; and it was settled that the meeting should, as similar assemblies had done before, proceed and conclude, undisturbed by the higher powers, so long as no positive act of sedition to the government or danger to the town was committed.

Scarcely was this arrangement agreed upon, before Lord Ulswater, who had hitherto been

absent, entered the room in which the magisterial conclave was assembled. Mr. Glumford (whom our readers will possibly remember as the suitor to Isabel St. Leger, and who had at first opposed, and then reluctantly subscribed to, Mordaunt's interference) bustled up to him.

"So, so, my lord," said he, "since I had the honour of seeing your lordship, quite a new sort of trump has been turned up."

"I do not comprehend your metaphorical elegancies of speech, Mr. Glumford," said Lord Ulswater.

Mr. Glumford explained. Lord Ulswater's cheek grew scarlet. "So Mr. Mordaunt has effected this wise alteration," said he.

"Nobody else, my lord, nobody else; and I am sure, though your lordship's estates are at the other end of the county, yet they are much larger than his; and since your lordship has a troop at your command, and that sort of thing,

I would not, if I were your lordship, suffer any such opposition to your wishes."

Without making a reply to this harangue, Lord Ulswater stalked haughtily up to Mordaunt, who was leaning against the wainscot, and conversing with those around him.

"I cannot but conceive, Mr. Mordaunt," said he, with a formal bow, "that I have been misinformed in the intelligence I have just received."

"Lord Ulswater will, perhaps, inform me to what intelligence he alludes."

"That Mr. Mordaunt, the representative of one of the noblest families in England, has given the encouragement and influence of his name and rank to the designs of a seditious and turbulent mob."

Mordaunt smiled slightly, as he replied—"Your Lordship *rightly* believes that you are misinformed. It is precisely because I would *not* have the mob you speak of seditious or

turbulent, that I have made it my request that the meeting of to-morrow should be suffered to pass off undisturbed."

"Then, Sir," cried Lord Ulswater, striking the table, with a violence which caused three reverend potentates of the province to start back in dismay, "I cannot but consider such interference on your part, to the last degree impolitic and uncalled for: these, Sir, are times of great danger to the state, and in which it is indispensably requisite to support and strengthen the authority of the law."

"I waive, at present," answered Mordaunt, "all reply to language, neither courteous nor appropriate. I doubt not but that the magistrates will decide as is most in accordance with the spirit of that law, which in this, and in all times, should be supported."

"Sir," said Lord Ulswater, losing his temper more and more, as he observed that the by-

standers, whom he had been accustomed to awe, all visibly inclined to the opinion of Mordaunt. "Sir, if your name has been instrumental in producing so unfortunate a determination on the part of the magistrates, I shall hold you responsible to the government for those results which ordinary prudence may calculate upon."

"When Lord Ulswater," said Mordaunt, sternly, "has learned what is due, not only to the courtesies of society, but to those legitimate authorities of his country, who (he ventures to suppose) are to be influenced contrary to their sense of duty, by any individual, then he may, perhaps, find leisure to make himself better acquainted with the nature of those laws which he now so vehemently upholds."

"Mr. Mordaunt, you will consider yourself answerable to me for those words," said Lord Ulswater, with a tone of voice unnaturally calm;

and the angry flush of his countenance was supplanted by a livid paleness.

"At all times, and in every sense," answered Mordaunt; and Lord Ulswater, turning on his heel, left the room.

As he repaired homeward, he saw one of his soldiers engaged in a loud and angry contest with a man, in the plain garb of a peaceful citizen; a third person standing by, appeared ineffectually endeavouring to pacify the disputants. A rigid disciplinarian, Lord Ulswater allowed not even party feeling, roused as it was, to conquer professional habits. He called off the soldier, and the man with whom the latter had been engaged immediately came up to Lord Ulswater, with a step as haughty as his own. The third person, who had attempted the peacemaker, followed him.

"I presume, Sir," said he, "that you are an officer of this man's regiment."

"I am his commanding officer, Sir," said Lord Ulswater, very little relishing the air and tone of the person who addressed him.

"Then," answered the man (who was, indeed, no other than Wolfe, who, having returned to W—— with Mordaunt, had already succeeded in embroiling himself in a dispute)—"then, Sir, I look to you for his punishment, and my redress;" and Wolfe proceeded, in his own exaggerated language, to detail a very reasonable cause of complaint. The fact was, that Wolfe, having met one of his compatriots, and conversing with him somewhat loudly, had uttered some words which attracted the spleen of the soldier, who was reeling home, very comfortably intoxicated; and the soldier had, most assuredly, indulged in a copious abuse of the d——d rebel, who could not walk the streets without chattering sedition.

Wolfe's friend confirmed the statement

The trooper attempted to justify himself; but Lord Ulswater saw his intoxication in an instant, and, secretly vexed that the complaint was not on the other side, ordered the soldier to his quarters, with a brief but sure threat of punishment on the morrow. Not willing, however, to part with the "d——d rebel," on terms so flattering to the latter, Lord Ulswater, turning to Wolfe, with a severe and angry air, said—

"As for you, fellow, I believe the whole fault was on your side; and if you dare again give vent to your disaffected ravings, I shall have you sent to prison, to tame your rank blood upon bread and water. Begone, and think yourself fortunate to escape now!"

The fierce spirit of Wolfe was in arms on the instant—and his reply, in subjecting him to Lord Ulswater's threat, might have, at least, prevented his enlightening the public on the morrow, had not his friend, a peaceable, pru-

dent man, seized him by the arm, and whispered—"What are you about?—Consider for what you are here—another word may rob the assembly of your presence. A man bent on a public cause, must not, on the eve of its trial, enlist in a private quarrel."

"True, my friend, true," said Wolfe, swallowing his rage, and eyeing Lord Ulswater's retreating figure with a menacing look; "but the time may yet come when I shall have license to retaliate on the upstart."

"So be it," quoth the other—"he is our bitterest enemy. You know, perhaps, that he is Lord Ulswater, of the ——— regiment. It has been at his instigation that the magistrates proposed to disturb the meeting. He has been known publicly to say, that all who attended the assembly ought to be given up to the swords of his troopers."

"The butchering dastard!—to dream even

of attacking unarmed men; but enough of him —I must tarry yet in the street to hear what success our intercessor has obtained." And as Wolfe passed the house in which the magisterial conclave sat, Mordaunt came out, and accosted him.

"You have sworn to me, that your purpose is peaceable," said Mordaunt.

"Unquestionably," answered Wolfe.

"And you will pledge yourself that no disturbance, that can either be effected, or counteracted, by yourself and friends, shall take place?"

"I will."

"Enough!" answered Mordaunt. "Remember, that if you commit the least act that can be thought dangerous, I may not be able to preserve you from the military. As it is, your meeting will be unopposed."

Contrary to Lord Ulswater's prediction, the meeting went off as quietly as an elderly maiden's tea party. The speakers, even Wolfe, not only took especial pains to recommend order and peace, but avoided, for the most part, all inflammatory enlargement upon the grievances of which they complained. And the sage foreboders of evil, who had locked up their silver spoons, and shaken their heads very wisely, for the last week, had the agreeable mortification of observing rather an appearance of good humour upon the countenances of the multitude, than that ferocious determination against the lives and limbs of the well-affected, which they had so sorrowfully anticipated.

As Mordaunt (who had been present during the whole time of the meeting) mounted his horse, and quitted the ground, Lord Ulswater having just left his quarters, where he had been all day in expectation of some violent act of the

orators or the mob, demanding his military services, rode up to Mordaunt.

"After what has passed between us," said he, with unusual and punctilious ceremony of address, "Mr. Mordaunt must be aware of the satisfaction I am necessitated to require."

"Lord Ulswater," answered Mordaunt, "will find me at any time prepared to give, since he has forestalled me in demanding, the satisfaction to which he refers."

"To-morrow," said Lord Ulswater, "I have the misfortune to be unavoidably engaged. The next day, if it suit you, punctually at the hour of two, I shall be at the column in the wood before us, only attended with a friend."

"I will not fail you, my lord," answered Mordaunt; and with this comfortable arrangement, so agreeably concluded, Lord Ulswater once more bowed to his horse's mane, and withdrew.

It so happened that Wolfe, wishing to speak to Mordaunt, had followed him from the ground, and overheard Lord Ulswater's last speech. In his design of addressing Mordaunt, Wolfe was, however, frustrated; for Algernon, immediately on the conclusion of Lord Ulswater's errand, set spurs to his horse, and not observing the republican, was speedily out of sight.

"Well, well," muttered Wolfe, "I know not why I should grieve at this--yet I do; they are both aristocrats, and foes to the happiness of the multitude. Of what greater avail, therefore, are the private virtues of the one than the arrogance and insolence of the other? No, no; let them both perish—let their own vitiated rules of honour become their own punishment and doom; and yet Mordaunt—his generosity, his talent, his ——. Pish! what are these to *us*?" And the stern Wolfe steeled his

heart, and plunging once more into the crowd, soon lost among his compatriots all recollection of the scene he had witnessed.

But Fate was surely, though darkly working out her own end, and neither her tool nor her victim dreamt yet of the method or the hour.

CHAPTER X.

> "Jam te premet nox, fabulæque Manes,
> Et domus exilis Plutonia."
>
> Hor.

The morning was dull and heavy, as Lord Ulswater mounted his horse, and, unattended, took his way towards Westborough Park. His manner was unusually thoughtful and absent; perhaps two affairs upon his hands, both of which seemed likely to end in bloodshed, were sufficient to bring reflection even to the mind of a cavalry officer.

He had scarcely got out of the town before he

was overtaken by our worthy friend Mr. Glumford. As he had been a firm ally of Lord Ulswater in the contest respecting the meeting, so, when he joined and saluted that nobleman, Lord Ulswater, mindful of past services, returned his greeting with an air rather of condescension than hauteur. To say truth, his lordship was never very fond of utter loneliness, and the respectful bearing of Glumford, joined to that mutual congeniality which sympathy in political views always occasions, made him more pleased with the society than shocked with the intrusion of the squire; so that when Glumford said, "If your lordship's way lies along this road, for the next five or six miles, perhaps your lordship will allow me the honour of accompanying you," Lord Ulswater graciously signified his consent to the proposal, and carelessly mentioning that he was going to Westborough Park, slid into that conversation with his new

companion which the meeting and its actors afforded.

Turn we for an instant to Clarence. At the appointed hour he had arrived at Westborough Park, and bidding his companion, the trusty Wardour, remain within the chaise which had conveyed them, he was ushered with a trembling heart, but a mien erect and self-composed, into Lady Westborough's presence; the marchioness was alone.

"I am sensible, Sir," said she, with a little embarrassment, "that it is not exactly becoming to my station and circumstances to suffer a meeting of the present nature between Lord Ulswater and yourself to be held within this house; but I could not resist the request of Lord Ulswater, conscious, from his character, that it could contain nothing detrimental to the—to the consideration and delicacy due to Lady Flora Ardenne."

Clarence bowed. " So far as I am concerned," said he, " I feel confident that Lady Westborough will not repent of her condescension."

There was a pause.

" It is singular," said Lady Westborough, looking to the French clock upon an opposite table, " that Lord Ulswater is not yet arrived."

" It is," said Clarence, scarcely conscious of his words, and wondering whether Lady Flora would deign to appear.

Another pause. Lady Westborough felt the awkwardness of her situation.

Clarence made an effort to recover himself.

" I do not see," said he, " the necessity of delaying the explanation I have to offer to your ladyship till my Lord Ulswater deems it suitable to him to appear. Allow me at once to enter into a history, told in few words, and easily proved."

" Stay," said Lady Westborough, struggling

with her curiosity ; " it is due to one who has stood in so peculiar a situation in our family, to wait yet a little longer for his coming. We will, therefore, till the hour is completed, postpone the object of our meeting."

Clarence again bowed, and was silent. Another and a longer pause ensued ; it was broken by the sound of the clock striking—the hour was completed.

" Now," began Clarence—when he was interrupted by a sudden and violent commotion in the hall. Above all, was heard, a loud and piercing cry, in which Clarence recognized the voice of the old steward. He rose abruptly, and stood motionless and aghast : his eyes met those of Lady Westborough, who, pale and agitated, lost, for the moment, all her habitual self-command. The sound increased : Clarence rushed from the room into the hall ; the open door of the apartment revealed to Lady Westborough as to

him a sight which allowed her no farther time for hesitation. She hurried after Clarence into the hall, gave one look, uttered one shriek of horror, and fainted.

CHAPTER XI.

> "*Iden.*—But thou wilt brave me in these saucy terms.
>
> *Cade.*—Brave thee! ay, by the best blood that ever was broached, and beard thee too."
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

"You see, my lord," said Mr. Glumford, to Lord Ulswater, as they rode slowly on, "that as long as those rebellious scoundrels are indulged in their spoutings and meetings, and that sort of thing, that—that there will be no bearing them."

"Very judiciously remarked, Sir," replied Lord Ulswater. "I wish all gentlemen of birth and consideration viewed the question in

the same calm, dispassionate, and profound light that you do. Would to heaven it were left to me to clear the country of those mutinous and dangerous rascals—I would make speedy and sure work of it."

"I am certain you would, my lord—I am certain you would. It is a thousand pities that pompous fellow, Mordaunt, interfered yesterday, with his moderation, and policy, and all that sort of thing—so foolish, you know, my lord—mere theory, and romance, and that sort of thing: we should have had it all our own way if he had not."

Lord Ulswater played with his riding whip, but did not reply. Mr. Glumford continued:

"Pray, my lord, did your lordship see what an ugly, ill-dressed set of dogs those *meetingers* were—that Wolfe, above all?—Oh, he's a horrid looking fellow. By-the-by, he left the town this very morning; I saw him take leave of his

friends in the street just before I set out. He is going to some other meeting—on foot, too. Only think of the folly of talking about the policy, and prudence, and humanity, and that sort of thing, of sparing such a pitiful poor fellow as that—can't afford a chaise, or a coach even—my lord—positively can't."

"You see the matter exactly in its true light, Mr. Glumford," said his lordship, patting his fine horse, which was somewhat impatient of the slow pace of his equine companion.

"A very beautiful animal of your lordship's," said Mr. Glumford, spurring his own horse—a heavy, dull quadruped, with an obstinate ill-set tail, a low shoulder, and a roman nose. "I am very partial to horses myself, and love a fine horse as well as anybody."

Lord Ulswater cast a glance at his companion's steed; and seeing nothing in its qualities to justify this assertion of attachment

to the *beau en cheval,* was silent. Lord Ulswater never flattered even his mistress, much less Mr. Glumford.

"I will tell you, my lord," continued Mr. Glumford, "what a bargain this horse was;" and the squire proceeded, much to Lord Ulswater's discontent, to detail the history of his craft in making the said bargain.

The riders were now entering a part of the road, a little more than two miles from Westborough Park, in which the features of the neighbouring country took a bolder and ruder aspect than they had hitherto worn. On one side of the road the view opened upon a descent of considerable depth, and the dull sun looked drearily over a valley in which large fallow fields, a distant and solitary spire, and a few stinted and withering trees, formed the chief characteristics. On the other side of the road a narrow foot-path was separated from the high-

way by occasional posts; and on this path Lord Ulswater—(how the minute and daily occurrences of life shew the grand pervading principles of character)—was, at the time we refer to, riding, in preference to the established thoroughfare for equestrian and aurigal travellers. The side of this path farthest from the road was bordered by a steep declivity of stony and gravelly earth, which almost deserved the dignified appellation of a precipice; and it was with no small exertion of dextrous horsemanship that Lord Ulswater kept his spirited and susceptible steed upon the narrow and somewhat perilous path, in spite of its frequent starts at the rugged descent below.

"I think, my lord, if I may venture to say so," said Mr. Glumford, having just finished the narration of his bargain, "that it would be better for you to take the high road just at present; for the descent from the foot-path is

steep and abrupt, and deuced crumbling; so that if your lordship's horse shied or took a wrong step, it might be attended with unpleasant consequences—a fall, or that sort of thing."

"You are very good, Sir," said Lord Ulswater, who, like most proud people, conceived advice an insult; "but I imagine myself capable of guiding my horse, at least upon a road so excellent as this."

"Certainly, my lord, certainly; I beg your pardon: but—bless me, who is that tall fellow in black, talking to himself yonder, my lord? The turn of the road hides him from *you* just at present; but *I* see him well. Ha-ha! what gestures he uses! I dare say he is one of the petitioners, and—yes, my lord, by Jupiter, it is Wolfe himself! You had better (excuse me, my lord), come down from the foot-path—it is not wide enough for two people—and Wolfe,

I dare say, a d—d rascal, would not get out of the way for the devil himself! He's a nasty, black, fierce-looking fellow; I would not for something meet him in a dark night, or that sort of thing!"

"I do not exactly understand, Mr. Glumford," returned Lord Ulswater, with a supercilious glance at that gentleman, "what peculiarities of temper you are pleased to impute to me, or from what you deduce the supposition that I shall move out of my way for a person of the low and plebeian cast of Mr. Woolt, or Wolfe, or whatever be his proper appellation."

"I beg your pardon, my lord, I am sure," answered Glumford; "of course your lordship knows best, and if the rogue is impertinent, why I'm a magistrate, and will commit him; though, to be sure," continued our righteous Daniel, in a lower key, "he has a right to walk upon the

footpath without being rode over, or that sort of thing."

The equestrians were now very near Wolfe, who, turning hastily round, perceived, and immediately recognized Lord Ulswater,—" Ah-ha," muttered he to himself, " here comes the insolent thirster for blood, grudging *us*, seemingly, even the meagre comfort of the path which his horse's hoofs are breaking up—yet, thank Heaven," added the republican, looking with a stern satisfaction at the narrowness of the footing, " he cannot very well pass me, and the free lion does not move out of his way for such servile though pampered and dangerous kine as those to which this creature belongs."

Actuated by this thought, Wolfe almost insensibly moved entirely into the middle of the path, so that what with the posts on one side, and the abrupt and undefended precipice, if we

may so call it, on the other, it was quite impossible for any horseman to pass the republican, unless over his body.

Lord Ulswater marked the motion, and did not want penetration to perceive the cause. Glad of an opportunity to wreak some portion of his irritation against a member of a body so offensive to his mind, and which had the day before obtained a sort of triumph over his exertions against them, and rendered obstinate in his intention by the pique he had felt at Glumford's caution, Lord Ulswater, tightening his rein, and humming, with apparent indifference, a popular tune, continued his progress till he was within a foot of the republican. Then checking his horse for a moment, he called, in a tone of quiet arrogance, to Wolfe to withdraw himself on one side till he had passed.

The fierce blood of the reformer, which the least breath of oppression sufficed to kindle, and

which yet boiled with the remembrance of Lord Ulswater's threat to him two nights before, was on fire at this command. He stopped short, and turning half round, stood erect in the strength and power of his singularly tall and not ungraceful form. "Poor and proud fool," said he, with a voice of the most biting scorn, and fixing an eye eloquent of ire and menaced danger upon the calmly contemptuous countenance of the patrician—"Poor and proud fool, do you think that your privileges have already reached so pleasant a pitch that you may ride over men like dust, and trample alike upon the law which gilds your insignificance, and upon those who detect the gilding, and despise the reality? Off, fool—the basest peasant in England, degraded as he is, would resist, while he ridiculed your arrogance."

Without deigning any reply, Lord Ulswater spurred his horse; the spirited animal bounded

forward, almost on the very person of the obstructor of the path; with uncommon agility Wolfe drew aside from the danger, seized, with a powerful grasp, the bridle, and abruptly arresting the horse, backed it fearfully towards the descent. Incensed beyond all presence of mind, the fated nobleman raising his whip, struck violently at the republican. The latter, as he felt the blow, uttered a single shout of such ferocity, that it curdled the timorous blood of Glumford, and with a giant and iron hand he backed the horse several paces down the precipice. The treacherous earth crumbled beneath the weight, and Lord Ulswater spurring his steed violently at the same instant that Wolfe so sharply and strongly curbed it, the affrighted animal reared violently, forced the rein from Wolfe, stood erect for a breathing point of horror to the spectator, and then as its footing and balance alike

failed it, fell backward, and rolled over and over its unfortunate and helpless rider.

"Good God!" cried Glumford, who had sat quietly upon his dozing horse, watching the result of the dispute—"what have you done? you have killed his lordship—positively killed him—and his horse, too, I dare say. You shall be hanged for this, Sir, as sure as I am a magistrate and that sort of thing."

Unheeding this denunciation, Wolfe had made to the spot where rider and horse lay blent together at the foot of the descent; and assisting the latter to rise, bent down to examine the real effect of his violence. "Methinks," said he, as he looked upon the hueless, but still defying features of the horseman—"methinks I have seen that face years before—but where? perhaps my dreams have foretold me this."

Lord Ulswater was utterly senseless; and as Wolfe raised him, he perceived the right side

of the head was covered with blood, and that one arm seemed crushed and broken. Meanwhile a carriage had appeared — was hailed by Glumford—stopped; and, on being informed of the circumstances, and the rank of the sufferer, the traveller, a single gentleman, descended, assisted to raise the unhappy nobleman—placed him in the carriage, and, obeying Glumford's instructions, proceeded slowly to Westborough Park.

"But the ruffian—the rebel—the murderer!" said Mr. Glumford, both querulously and inquiringly, looking towards Wolfe, who, without having attempted to assist his victim, stood aloof, with arms folded, and an expression of sated ferocity upon his speaking features.

"Oh! as to him," quoth the traveller, stepping into his carriage, in order to support the mangled man—"you, Sir, and my valet can bring him along with you, or take him to

the next town, or do, in short, with him just as you please, only be sure he does not escape—drive on, post-boy, very gently." And poor Mr. Glumford found the muscular form of the stern Wolfe consigned to the sole care of himself and a very diminutive man in pea-green silk stockings, who, however excellently well he might perform the office of valet, was certainly by no means calculated in physical powers for the detention of a criminal.

Wolfe saved the pair a world of trouble and anxiety.

"Sir," said he, gravely turning to Glumford, "you beheld the affray, and, whatever its consequences, will do me the common justice of witnessing as to the fact of the first aggressor: it will, however, be satisfactory to both of us to seize the earliest opportunity of putting the matter upon a legal footing, and I shall, there-

fore, return to W ——, to which town you will doubtless accompany me."

"With all my heart!" cried Mr. Glumford, feeling as if a mountain of responsibility were taken from his breast. "And I wish to God you may be transported instead of hanged!"

CHAPTER XII.

> "But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew,
> And dull the film along his dim eye grew."
>
> BYRON.

The light broke partially through the half-closed shutters of the room in which Lord Ulswater—who, awakened to sense and pain by the motion of the carriage, had now relapsed into insensibility—lay. By the side of the sofa on which he was laid, knelt Clarence, bathing one hand with tears violent and fast; on the opposite side leant over, with bald front, and an expression of mingled fear and sorrow

upon his intent countenance, the old steward, while, at a little distance, Lord Westborough, who had been wheeled into the room, sat mute in his chair, aghast with bewilderment and horror, and counting every moment to the arrival of the surgeon, who had been sent for. The stranger to whom the carriage belonged stood by the window, detailing, in a low voice, to the chaplain of the house, what particulars of the occurrence he was acquainted with, while the youngest scion of the family, a boy of about ten years, and who, in the general confusion, had thrust himself unnoticed into the room, stood close to the pair, with open mouth and thirsting ears, and a face on which childish interest at a fearful tale was strongly blent with the more absorbed feeling of terror at the truth.

Slowly Lord Ulswater opened his eyes—they rested upon Clarence.

"My brother—my brother!" cried Clarence, in a voice of powerful anguish—"is it thus—thus that you have come hither to—" He stopped in the gushing fulness of his heart. Extricating from Clarence the only hand he was able to use, Lord Ulswater raised it to his brow, as if in the effort to clear remembrance; and then, turning to Wardour, seemed to ask the truth of Clarence's claim—at least so the old man interpreted the meaning of his eye, and the faint and scarce intelligible words which broke from his lips.

"It is—it is, my honoured lord," cried he, struggling with his emotion—"it is your brother—your lost brother, Clinton L'Estrange." And as he said these words, Clarence felt the damp chill hand of his brother press his own, and knew by that pressure and the smile—kind, though brief from exceeding pain—with which the ill-fated nobleman looked upon him, that

the claim long unknown was at last acknowledged, and the ties long broken united, though in death.

The surgeon arrived—the room was cleared of all but Clarence—the first examination was sufficient. Unaware of Clarence's close relationship to the sufferer, the surgeon took him aside—"A very painful operation," said he, "might be performed, but it would only torture, in vain, the last moments of the patient: no human skill can save, or even protract his life."

The doomed man who, though in great pain, was still sensible, stirred. His brother flew towards him. "Flora," he murmured, in a tone so low, that nothing but the acute and strained nerves of his listener could have distinguished its meaning—"let me see *her*, I implore."

Curbing as much as he was able his emotion, and conquering his reluctance to leave the suf-

ferer even for a moment, Clarence flew in search of Lady Flora. He found her: in rapid and hasty words, he signified the wish of the dying man, and hurried her, confused, trembling, and scarce conscious of the melancholy scene she was about to witness, to the side of her affianced bridegroom.

I have been by the death-beds of many men, and I have noted that shortly before death, as the frame grows weaker and weaker, the fiercer passions yield to those feelings better harmonizing with the awfulness of the hour. Thoughts soft and tender, which seemed little to belong to the character in the health and vigour of former years, obtain then an empire, brief, indeed, but utter for the time they last—and this is the more impressive, because (as in the present instance I shall have occasion to portray) in the moments which succeed and make *the very* latest of life, the ruling passion,

suppressed for an interval by such gentler feelings, again returns to take its final triumph over that frail clay which, through existence, it has swayed, agitated and moulded like wax unto its will.

When Lord Ulswater saw Flora approach and bend weepingly over him, a momentary softness broke over a face, on which was rapidly gathering a sterner pride than even that which it had worn in life. Taking her hand, he extended it towards Clarence; and, turning to the latter, faltered out—"Let this—my—brother—atone—for——;" apparently unable to finish the sentence, he then relaxed his hold and sunk upon the pillow: and so still, so apparently breathless, did he remain for several minutes, that they thought the latest agony was over.

As, yielding to this impression, Clarence was about to withdraw the scarce conscious Flora

from the chamber, words less tremulous and indistinct than aught which he had yet uttered, broke from Lord Ulswater's lips. Clarence hastened to him; and, bending over his countenance, saw that, even through the rapid changes and shades of death, it darkened with the peculiar characteristics of the unreleased soul within:—the brow was knit into more than its wonted sternness and pride; and in the eye, which glared upon the opposite wall, the light of the waning life broke into a momentary blaze—that flash, so rapid and evanescent, before the air drinks in the last spark of the being it has animated, and night—the starless and eternal—falls over the extinguished lamp! The hand of the right arm (which was that unshattered by the fall) was clenched, and raised; but when the words which came upon Clarence's ear had ceased, it fell heavily by his side, like a clod of

that clay which it had then become. In those words, it seemed as if, in the confused delirium of passing existence, the brave soldier mingled some dim and bewildered recollection of former battles, with that of his last most fatal, though most ignoble strife.

"Down, down with them," he muttered, between his teeth, though in a tone startlingly deep and audible; "down with them. No quarter to the infidels—strike for England and Effingham. Ha!—who—strives for flight there? kill him—no mercy, I say—none!—There—there—I have dispatched him—ha!—ha!—What, still alive—off, slave, off!—Oh, slain—slain in a ditch, by a base-born hind—oh—bitter—bitter—bitter!" And with these words, of which the last, from their piercing anguish and keen despair, made a dread contrast with the fire and defiance of the first, the jaw fell—

the flashing and fierce eye glazed and set—and all of the haughty and bold patrician which the earth retained was—dust!*

* The cause and circumstances of Lord Ulswater's death, as well as the whole outline of our hero's history, are taken from facts which occurred in the last century, and for which (with the obvious exception of different names, and a few other necessary variations) we are indebted to the private memoirs of a distinguished and noble family. The spot where Lord Ulswater received his mortal hurt, remains still unaltered, even in this day, when hollow and hill are fast vanishing beneath the spells of Melioration and MacAdam.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Il n'est jamais permis de détériorer une ame humaine pour l'advantage des autres, ni de faire un scélérat pour le service des honnêtes gens."

Rousseau.

As the reader approaches the termination of this narrative, and looks back upon the many scenes he has passed, perhaps, in the mimic representation of human life, he may find no unfaithful resemblance to the true.

As, amongst the crowd of characters jostled against each other in their course, some drop off at the first, the second, or the third stage, and leave a few only continuing to the last, while

Fate chooses her agents and survivors among those whom the by-stander, perchance, least noticed as the objects of her selection—and they who, haply, seemed to him, at first, among the most conspicuous as characters, sink, some abruptly, some gradually, into actors of the least importance in events; as the reader notes the same passion, in different strata, producing the most opposite qualities, and gathers from that notice some estimate of the vast perplexity in the code of morals, deemed by the shallow so plain a science, when he finds that a similar and single feeling will produce both the virtue we love and the vice we detest, the magnanimity we admire and the meanness we despise; as the feeble hands of the author force into contrast ignorance and wisdom, the affectation of philosophy and its true essence, coarseness and refinement, the lowest vulgarity of sentiment with an exaltation of feeling ap-

proaching to morbidity, the reality of virtue with the counterfeit, the glory of the Divinity with the hideousness of the Idol, sorrow and eager joy, marriage and death, tears and their young successors, smiles; as all, blent together, these varieties of life form a single yet many-coloured web, leaving us to doubt whether, in fortune, the bright hue or the dark—in character, the base material or the rich, predominate—the workman of the web could almost reconcile himself to his glaring and great deficiency in art, by the fond persuasion that he has, at least in his choice of tint and texture, caught something of the likeness of Nature: but he knows, to the abasement of his vanity, that these enumerated particulars of resemblance to life, are common to all, even to the most unskilful of his brethren; and it is not the mere act of copying a true original, but the rare circumstance of force and accuracy in the

copy, which can alone constitute a just pretension to merit, or flatter the artist with the hope of a moderate success.

The news of Lord Ulswater's untimely death soon spread around the neighbourhood, and reached the ears of Mordaunt at the very hour he was preparing for the appointed meeting with that ill-starred nobleman. Finding himself forestalled by a more deadly and a surer foe, Algernon repaired to W——, to gather from Wolfe some less exaggerated account of the affray than that which the many tongues of Rumour had brought to him.

It was no difficult matter to see the precise share of blame to be attached to Wolfe; and, notwithstanding the biassed account of Glumford, and the strong spirit of party then existing in the country, no rational man could, for a moment, term the event of a sudden fray a pre-

meditated murder, or the violence of the aggrieved, the black offence of a wilful criminal. Wolfe, therefore, soon obtained a release from the confinement to which he had been first committed; and, with a temper made still more exasperate than before, by the evident disposition of his auditors to have treated him, had it been possible, with the utmost rigour, he returned to companions, well calculated, by their converse and bent of mind, to inflame the fester of his moral constitution.

It happens, generally, that men very vehement in any particular opinion, choose their friends, not for a general similarity of character, but in proportion to their mutual congeniality of sentiment upon that particular opinion; it happens, also, that those most *audibly* violent, if we may so speak, upon *any* opinion, moral or political, are rarely the wisest or the purest of their party. Those with whom Wolfe was inti-

mate were men who shared none of the nobler characteristics of the republican; still less did they participate, or even comprehend, the enlightened and benevolent views, for which the wise and great men of that sect—a sect to which all philanthropy is, perhaps too fondly, inclined to lean—have been so conspicuously eminent. On the contrary, Wolfe's comrades, without education, and consequently without principle, had been driven to disaffection, by desperate fortunes and ruined reputations, acting upon minds polluted by the ignorance, and hardened among the dross, of the populace. But the worst can, by constant intercourse, corrupt the best; and the barriers of good and evil, often confused in Wolfe's mind by the blindness of his passions, seemed, as his intercourse with these lawless and ruffian associates thickened, to be at last utterly broken down and swept away.

Unhappily too—soon after Wolfe's return to

London—the popular irritation shewed itself in mobs, perhaps rather to be termed disorderly than seditious; the ministers, however, thought otherwise; the military were summoned, and, in dispersing the mob, much injury, resulting, it is to be hoped, from accident, not design, ensued to many of the persons assembled. Some were severely wounded by the swords of the soldiers—others maimed and trampled upon by the horses, which shared the agitation or irritability of their riders; and a few, among whom were two women, and three children, lost their lives. Wolfe had been one of the crowd—and the scene, melancholy as it really was, and appearing to his temper unredeemed and inexcusable on the part of the soldiers—left on his mind a deep and burning impression of revenge. Justice (as they termed it) was demanded by strong bodies of the people upon the soldiers; but the administration, deeming it politic rather

to awe than to conciliate, advised the sovereign, so far from censuring the military, to thank them for their exertions.

From that time, Wolfe appears to have resolved upon the execution of a design, which he had long imperfectly and confusedly meditated.

This was no less a crime (and to him did conscientiously seem no less a virtue), than to seize a favourable opportunity for assassinating the most prominent member of the administration, and the one who, above all the rest, was the most odious to the disaffected. It must be urged in extenuation of the atrocity of this design, that a man, perpetually brooding over one scheme, which to him has become the very sustenance of existence, and which scheme perpetually frustrated, grows desperate by disappointment, acquires a heat of morbid and oblique enthusiasm, which may not be unreasonably termed insanity; and that, at the very time

Wolfe reconciled it to his conscience to commit the murder of his fellow creature, he would have moved out of his path for a worm. Assassination, indeed, seemed to him justice; and the execution of a felon, the glory of martyrdom.

Thank heaven, that neither Religion nor Liberty are to be judged by the occasional madness of their defenders. The hosts of an invading and impious conqueror may be under a better discipline, and commit fewer irregularities than a patriot army, heated into excess, by the very holiness of the cause they support. "All is not (says Lord Shaftesbury, with justice) *fucus*, or mere varnish; nor is the face of Truth less fair, for all the counterfeit vizards which have been put upon her."

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAPTER XIV.

"And thou that silent at my knee,
Dost lift to mine thy soft dark earnest eyes,
Filled with the love of childhood, which I see
Pure through its depths—a thing without disguise:
Thou that hast breathed in slumber on my breast,
When I have checked its throbs to give thee rest,
Mine own, whose young thoughts fresh before me rise,
Is it not much that I may guide thy prayer,
And circle thy young soul with free and healthful air."

HEMANS.

THE events we have recorded, from the time of Clarence's visit to Mordaunt, to the death of Lord Ulswater, took place within little more than a week. We have now to pass in silence over several weeks: and, as it was the commencement of autumn when we introduced Clarence and

Mordaunt to our reader, so it is the first opening of winter in which we will resume the thread of our narration.

Mordaunt had removed to London; and although he had not yet taken any share in public business, he was only watching the opportunity to commence a career, the brilliancy of which, those who knew aught of his mind, began already to foretell. But he mixed little, if at all, with the gayer occupants of the world's prominent places. Absorbed alternately in his studies and his labours of good, the halls of pleasure were seldom visited by his presence: and they who, in the crowd, knew nothing of him but his name, and the lofty bearing of his mien, recoiled from the coldness of his exterior, and while they marvelled at his retirement and reserve, saw in both but the moroseness of the student, and the gloom of the misanthropist.

But the nobleness of his person—the anti-

quity of his birth—his wealth—his unblemished character, and the interest thrown over his name, by the reputation of talent, and the unpenetrated mystery of his life, all powerfully spake in his favour to that sex who judge us not only from what we are to others, but from what they imagine we can be to them. From such allurements, however, as from all else, the mourner turned only the more deeply to cherish the memory of the dead; and it was a touching and holy sight, to mark the mingled excess of melancholy and fondness with which he watched over that treasure in whose young beauty and guileless heart, his departed Isabel had yet left the resemblance of her features and her love. There seemed between them to exist even a dearer and closer tie than that of daughter and sire; for in both, the objects which usually divide the affections of the man or the child, had but a feeble charm: Isabel's mind had

opened beyond her years, and Algernon's had outgrown his time; so that neither the sports natural to her age, nor the ambitions ordinary to his, were sufficient to wean or to distract the clinging and the unity of their love. When, after absence, his well known step trod lightly in the hall, her ear, which had listened, and longed, and thirsted for the sound, taught her fairy feet to be the first to welcome his return; and when the slightest breath of sickness menaced her slender frame, it was his hand that smoothed her pillow, and his smile that cheered away her pain; and when she sunk into sleep, she knew that a father's heart watched over her through the long but untiring night— that a father's eye would be the first which, on waking, she would meet.

"Oh! beautiful, and rare as beautiful," was that affection; in the parent no earthlier or harder sternness in authority, nor weakness in

doating, nor caprice in love—in the child no fear debasing reverence, yet no familiarity diminishing respect. But Love, whose pride is in serving, seemed to make at once soft and hallowed the offices mutually rendered—and Nature, never counteracted in her dictates, wrought out, without a visible effort, the proper channels into which those offices should flow; and that Charity, which not only covers sins, but lifts the veil from virtues, whose beauty might otherwise have lain concealed, linked them closer and closer, and threw over that link the sanctity of itself. For it was Algernon's sweetest pleasure to make her young hands the ministers of good to others, and to drink, at such times, from the rich glow of her angel countenance, the purified selfishness of his reward. And when after the divine joy *of blessing*, which, perhaps, the youngest taste yet more vividly than their sires, she threw her

arms around his neck, and thanked him with glad tears for the luxury he had bestowed upon her, how could they, in that gushing overflow of heart, help loving each other the more, or feeling, that in that love, there was something which justified the excess?

Nor have we drawn with too exaggerating a pencil, nor, though Isabel's *mind* was older than her years, extended that prematureness to her *heart*. For, where we set the example of benevolence, and see that the example is in nought corrupted, the milk of human kindness will flow not the least readily from the youngest breast, and out of the mouths of babes will come the wisdom of charity and love!

Ever since Mordaunt's arrival in town, he had sought out Wolfe's abode, for the purpose of ministering to the poverty under which he rightly conjectured that the republican laboured. But the habitation of one needy, dis-

tressed, seldom living long in one place, and far less notorious of late than he had formerly been, was not easy to discover; nor was it till after long and vain search that he ascertained the retreat of his singular acquaintance. The day in which he effected this object we shall have hereafter occasion to specify. Meanwhile we return to Mr. Crauford.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Plot on thy little hour, and skein on skein
Weave the vain mesh, in which thy subtle soul
Broods on its venom! Lo! behind, before,
Around thee, like an armament of cloud,
The black Fate labours onward."

ANON.

THE dusk of a winter's evening gathered over a room in Crauford's house in town, only reliev-ed from the closing darkness by an expiring and sullen fire, beside which Mr. Bradley sat, with his feet upon the fender, apparently striving to coax some warmth into the icy palms of his spread hands. Crauford himself was walking up and down the room with a changeful step,

and ever and anon glancing his bright, shrewd eye at the partner of his fraud, who, seemingly unconscious of the observation he underwent, appeared to occupy his attention solely with the difficulty of warming his meagre and withered frame.

"Ar'n't you very cold there, honoured Sir," said Bradley, after a long pause, and pushing himself farther into the verge of the dying embers—"may I not ring for some more coals?"

"Hell and the —— I beg your pardon, my good Bradley, but you vex me beyond patience: how can you think of such trifles, when our very lives are in so imminent a danger?"

"I beg your pardon, my honoured benefactor, they are indeed in danger!"

"Bradley, we have but one hope—fidelity to each other. If we persist in the same story, not a tittle can be brought home to us—not a tittle, my good Bradley; and though our characters may be a little touched, why, what is a

character? Shall we eat less, drink less, enjoy less, when we have lost it? Not a whit. No, my friend, we will go abroad: leave it to me to save from the wreck of our fortunes enough to live upon like princes."

"If not like *peers*, my honoured benefactor."

"'Sdeath!—yes, yes, very good—he! he! he! if not peers. Well, all happiness is in the senses, and Richard Crauford has as many senses as Viscount Innisdale; but had we been able to protract inquiry another week, Bradley, why, I would have been my Lord, and you Sir John."

"You bear your losses like a hero, Sir," said Mr. Bradley.

"To be sure; there *is* no loss, man, but life—none; let us preserve that—and it will be our own fault if we don't—and the devil take all the rest. But, bless me, it grows late, and at all events, we are safe for some hours; the inquiry won't take place till twelve to-morrow,

why should we not feast till twelve to-night? Ring, my good fellow, dinner must be nearly ready."

"Why, honoured Sir," said Bradley, "I want to go home to see my wife, and arrange my house. Who knows but I may sleep in Newgate to-morrow?"

Crauford, who had been still walking to and fro, stopped abruptly at this speech, and his eye, even through the gloom, shot out a livid and fierce light, before which the timid and humble glance of Mr. Bradley quailed in an instant.

"Go home!—no, my friend, no, I can't part with you to-night, no, not for an instant. I have many lessons to give you. How are we to learn our parts for to-morrow, if we don't rehearse them beforehand? Do you not know that a single blunder may turn what I hope will be a farce into a tragedy? Go home!—pooh, pooh—why, man, I have not seen *my* wife, nor put *my*

house to rights, and if you do but listen to me, I tell you again and again that not a hair of our heads can be touched."

"You know best, honoured Sir; I bow to your decision."

"Bravo, honest Brad! and now for dinner. I have the most glorious champagne that ever danced in foam to your lip. No counsellor like the bottle, believe me!"

And the servant entering to announce dinner, Crauford took Bradley's arm, and leaning affectionately upon it, passed through an obsequious and liveried row of domestics to a room blazing with light and plate. A noble fire was the first thing which revived Bradley's spirit, and as he spread his hands over it before he sat down to table, he surveyed, with a gleam of gladness upon his thin cheeks, four vases of massy gold, formerly the boast of a king, in which were immersed the sparkling genii of the grape.

Crauford, always a gourmand, eat with unusual appetite, and pressed the wine upon Bradley with an eager hospitality, which soon somewhat clouded the senses of the worthy man. The dinner was removed, the servants retired, and the friends were left alone.

"A pleasant trip to France!" cried Crauford, filling a bumper. "That's the land for hearts like ours. I tell you what, little Brad, we will leave our wives behind us, and take, with a new country, and new names, a new lease of life. What will it signify to men, making love at Paris, what fools say of them in London? Another bumper, honest Brad—a bumper to the girls! What say you to that, eh?"

"Lord, Sir, you are so facetious—so witty! It must be owned that a black eye is a great temptation—Lira-lira, la-la!" and Mr. Bradley's own eyes rolled joyously.

"Bravo, Brad!—a song, a song! but treason to King Burgundy! Your glass is—"

"Empty—honoured Sir, I know it!—Lira-lira la!—but it is easily filled! We, who have all our lives been pouring from one vessel into another, know how to keep it up to the last!

"Courage then, cries the knight, we may yet be forgiven
Or at worst buy the bishop's reversion in heaven;
Our frequent escapes in this world shew how true 'tis,
That gold is the only *Elixir Salutis.*
Derry down, derry down.

"All you, who to swindling conveniently creep,
Ne'er piddle—by thousands the treasury sweep;
Your safety depends on the weight of the sum,
For no rope was yet made that could tie up a plum.
Derry down, &c."*

"Bravissimo, little Brad!—you are quite a wit! See what it is to have one's faculties called out. Come, a toast to old England, the land in which no man ever wants a farthing who has wit to steal it—'Old England for

* From a ballad called "The Knight and the Prelate."

ever!' Your rogue is your only true patriot!" —and Crauford poured the remainder of the bottle, nearly three parts full, into a beaker, which he pushed to Bradley. That convivial gentleman emptied it at a draught, and, muttering out, "Honest Sir John!—room for my Lady Bradley's carriage," dropped down on the floor insensible.

Crauford rose instantly, satisfied himself that the intoxication was genuine, and, giving the lifeless body a kick of contemptuous disgust, left the room, muttering—"The dull ass, did he think it was on his back that I was going to ride off!—He!—he!—he! But stay, let me feel my pulse. Too fast by twenty strokes! One's never sure of the mind if one does not regulate the body to a hair! Drank too much—must take a powder before I start."

Mounting by a back staircase to his bedroom, Crauford unlocked a chest, took out a

bundle of clerical clothes, a large shovel-hat, and a huge wig. Hastily, but not carelessly indueing himself in these articles of disguise, he then proceeded to stain his fair cheeks with a preparation which soon gave them a swarthy hue. Putting his own clothes in the chest, which he carefully locked, (placing the key in his pocket,) he next took from a desk on his dressing-table a purse; opening this, he extracted a diamond of great size and immense value, which, years before, in preparation of the event that had now taken place, he had purchased.

His usual sneer curled his lip as he gazed at it. "Now," said he, "is it not strange that this little stone should supply the mighty wants of that grasping thing, man! Who talks of religion, country, wife, children? This petty mineral can purchase them all! Oh, what a bright joy speaks out in your white cheek, my beauty! What are all human charms to

yours? Why, by your spell, most magical of talismans, my years may walk, gloating and revelling, through a lane of beauties, till they fall into the grave! Pish!—that grave is an ugly thought—a very, very ugly thought! But come, my sun of hope, I must eclipse you for a while! Type of myself—while you hide, I hide also; and when I once more let you forth to the day, *then* shine out Richard Crauford—shine out!" So saying, he sewed the diamond carefully in the folds of his shirt; and rearranging his dress, took the cooling powder, which he weighed out, to a grain, with a scrupulous and untrembling hand—descended the back stairs—opened the door, and found himself in the open street.

The clock struck ten as he entered a hackney-coach and drove to another part of London. "What, so late!" thought he: "I must be at Dover in twelve hours—the vessel sails then:

Humph!—some danger yet! What a pity that I could not trust that fool. He!—he!—he!—what will he think to-morrow, when he wakes and finds that only one is destined to swing!"

The hackney-coach stopped, according to his direction, at an inn in the city. Here Crauford asked if a note had been left for Dr. Stapylton. One (written by himself) was given to him. "Merciful Heaven!" cried the false doctor, as he read it, "my daughter is on a bed of death!"

The landlord's look wore anxiety—the doctor seemed for a moment paralized by silent woe. He recovered, shook his head piteously, and ordered a post-chaise and four on to Canterbury without delay.

"It is an ill wind that blows nobody good!" thought the landlord, as he issued the order into the yard.

The chaise was soon out—the doctor entered

—off went the post-boys—and Richard Crauford, feeling his diamond, turned his thoughts to safety and to France.

A little, unknown man, who had been sitting at the bar for the last two hours, sipping brandy and water, and who, from his extreme taciturnity and quiet, had been scarcely observed, now rose. "Landlord," said he, "do you know who that gentleman is?"

"Why," quoth Boniface, "the letter to him was directed, 'For the Rev. Dr. Stapylton—will be called for.'"

"Ah!" said the little man, yawning—"I shall have a long night's work of it—Have you another chaise and four in the yard?"

"To be sure, Sir, to be sure!" cried the landlord, in astonishment.

"Out with it, then! Another glass of brandy and water—a little stronger—no sugar!"

The landlord stared—the bar-maid stared—even the head waiter, a very stately person, stared too.

" Harkye," said the little man, sipping his brandy and water, " I am a deuced good natured fellow, so I'll make you a great man to-night; for nothing makes a man so great as being let into a great secret. Did you ever hear of the rich Mr. Crauford ?"

" Certainly—who has not ?"

" Did you ever see him ?"

" No! I can't say I ever did."

" You lie, landlord—you saw him to-night."

" Sir !" cried the landlord, bristling up.

The little man pulled out a brace of pistols, and very quietly began priming them out of a small power flask.

The landlord started back—the head waiter cried rape, and the bar-maid murder.

"Who the devil are you, Sir?" cried the landlord.

"Mr. Tickletrout, the celebrated officer—thief-taker, as they call it. Have a care, ma'am, the pistols are loaded. I see the chaise is out—there's the reckoning, landlord."

"O Lord! I'm sure I don't want any reckoning — too great an honour for my poor house to be favoured with your company; but (following the little man to the door) who did you please to say you were going to catch?"

"Mr. Crauford, alias Dr. Stapylton."

"Lord! Lord!—to think of it—how shocking! What has he done?"

"Swindled, I believe."

"My eyes. And why, Sir, did not you catch him when he was in the bar?"

"Because then I should not have got paid

for my journey to Dover. Shut the door, boy; first stage on to Canterbury."

And drawing a woollen night-cap over his ears, Mr. Tickletrout resigned himself to his nocturnal excursion.

On the very day on which the patent for his peerage was to have been made out—on the very day on which he had afterwards calculated on reaching Paris — on that very day was Mr. Richard Crauford lodged in Newgate, fully committed for a trial of life and death.

CHAPTER XVI.

> "There, if, O gentle Love! I read aright
> The utterance that sealed thy sacred bond;
> 'Twas listening to those accents of delight
> She hid upon his breast those eyes—beyond
> Expression's power to paint—all languishingly fond."
>
> CAMPBELL.

"AND you will positively leave us for London," said Lady Flora, tenderly—"and to-morrow, too!" This was said to one who, under the name of Clarence Linden, has played the principal part in our drama, and who now, by the death of his brother, succeeding to the honours of his house, we present to our reader as Clinton L'Estrange, Earl of Ulswater.

They were alone in the memorable pavilion; and though it was winter, the sun shone cheerily into the apartment; and through the door, which was left partly open, the evergreens, contrasting with the leafless boughs of the oak and beech, could be just descried, furnishing the lover with some meet simile of love, and deceiving the eyes of those willing to be deceived with a resemblance to the departed summer. The unusual mildness of the day seemed to operate genially upon the birds—those children of light and song; and they grouped blithely beneath the window and round the door, where the hand of the kind young spirit of the place had so often ministered to their wants. Every now and then, too, you might hear the shrill glad note of the blackbird keeping measure to his swift and low flight, and sometimes a vagrant hare from the neighbouring preserves sauntered fearlessly by the half shut door,

secure, from long experience, of an asylum in the vicinity of one, who had drawn from the breast of Nature a tenderness and love for all its offspring.

Her lover sat at Flora's feet; and looking upward, seemed to seek out the fond and melting eyes which, too conscious of their secret, turned bashfully from his gaze. He had drawn her arm over his shoulder; and clasping that small and snowy hand, which, long coveted with a miser's desire, was at length won, he pressed upon it a thousand kisses—sweeter beguilers of time than even words. All had been long explained—the space between their hearts annihilated—doubt, anxiety, misconstruction, those clouds of love, had passed away, and left not a wrack to obscure its heaven.

"And you will leave us to-morrow—must it be to-morrow?"

"Ah! Flora, it must; but see, I have your lock of hair — your beautiful, dark hair, to kiss, when I am away from you, and I shall have your letters, dearest—a letter every day; and, oh! more than all, I shall have the hope, the certainty, that when we meet again, you will be mine for ever."

"And I, too, must, by seeing it in your hand-writing, learn to reconcile myself to your new name. Ah! I wish you had been still Clarence — only Clarence. Wealth, rank, power—what are all these but rivals to your poor Flora?"

"But Clinton is a name very, very like Clarence, dearest;" and the imprisoned hand was kissed more passionately than ever.

"And—and—when will you return?"

"Directly I can be spared—I have, you know, some duties yet to discharge to the ministers, though I have resigned my official situa-

tion, and in the present crisis they are anxious even for *my* assistance."

Lady Flora sighed, and the next moment blushed; and what with the sigh and the blush, Clarence's lips wandered from the hand to the cheek, and thence to a mouth, on which the west wind seemed to have left the sweets of a thousand summers.

Oh! in this thorny and troubled earth, where Love, the offspring of some other world, finds rarely shelter but in the wilderness and the cave—where Sorrow and Disappointment, and Shame, and the shadows of early Death track its unguided footsteps, and watch, like the weird torturers of Orestes, over its brief and perilous repose, it is sweet to behold it, though only for an instant, enshrined in a temple worthy to become its refuge and meet for the homage of our vows.

For ye, young lovers, whose bright fates have

contrasted the doom of those whom this wayward history has also recorded — those who through woe and want loved, as ye shall do through the equal trial of happiness and splendour—for you, long years of sunshine are in store — years which, in ripening your virtues, shall only increase your capacities of love !—Pardon, if, for one brief moment, your historian pauses to mingle the gushings of his own affections with the tale which he dedicates to yours! Beautiful Being, whom now, in no wild and boyish vision, I behold, with thy soft eyes which are as the mirrors of human tenderness, and thy pure brow where never cloud or shade ruffled the abode of all gentle and woman thought, and thy fairy and fond step, where the vigilance and care of love preside and sleep not, hast thou filled the fountains of my heart with a mighty and deep stream, and shall they not overflow? Thy cheek is paler than it was, my

love, and thy smile has a fainter play, and the music of thy sweet voice is more low and hushed, and the zephyr that waiteth on thy footstep flags at times with a weaker wing; so that when I look on thee my eyes have tears, but they are not the tears of sorrow; for to *me* there is a brighter lustre in thy youth than when in the glory of an earlier spring the cheek of the very Hebe would have been dim to thine! Has not the bloom of affection a richer damask than the bloom of health? In thy looks I behold the loveliness of comfort and of hope, and thy smile has the beauty of the steps which, upon the mountain top, are the messengers of glad tidings. Thou hast trusted thine ALL with me; and while the vessel yet lives through the stormy tide, thy treasures shall be safe! But the blast and the tempest have already shattered the bark, and the clouds are still black, and the land lies viewless and afar; and, in truth, the wayward

heart that thou hast so often borne with, thou mayest have yet but a little longer to endure, for my wanderings have not been without a shadow, nor my slumbers without a vision, and even now the voice of a warning that will not be stilled falls low but ominously on my ear! Ah, sweeter far than fame is the still sleep in which all contest, all envy are at rest—the early doom where the eye dwelleth in death upon the vigils of affection, and the heart is not sentenced to survive youth, and love, and hope—a mourner over many tombs! For Time bereaves us of all, nor could aught that has earth's mixture (and what but *thy* tenderness has not?) endure its test: it is not only the links, but the garlands of life that are loosed with the silver cord, and the heart's last treasure is broken long before the heart itself breaks with the golden bowl at the cistern. But for thee, my latest and my living dream—for thee, what blessing

shall I invoke? In the silence I have made a vow; in the night I have recorded a pledge. Come under the shadow of my soul; and while it yet lives to the things of earth, it is in my vow and my pledge that thy blessing shall be found!

CHAPTER XVII.

"A Hounsditch man, one of the devil's near kinsmen—a broker."

Every Man in his Humour.

"We have here discovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth."

Much Ado about Nothing.

It was an evening of mingled rain and wind, the hour about nine, when Mr. Morris Brown, under shelter of that admirable umbrella of sea-green silk, to which we have before had the felicity to summon the attention of our readers, was, after a day of business, plodding homeward his weary way. The obscure streets through which his course was bent, were at no time very thickly thronged, and at the present hour the

inclemency of the night rendered them utterly deserted. It is true that now and then a solitary female holding up, with one hand, garments already piteously bedraggled, and with the other thrusting her umbrella in the very teeth of the hostile winds, might be seen crossing the intersected streets, and vanishing amid the subterranean recesses of some kitchen area, or tramping onward amidst the mazes of the metropolitan labyrinth, till, like the cuckoo, "heard," but no longer "seen," the echo of her retreating pattensmade a dying music to the reluctant ear; or indeed, at intervals of unfrequent occurrence, a vehicle of hackney appellation jolted, rumbling, clattering, bumping over the uneven stones, as if groaning forth its gratitude to the elements for which it was indebted for its fare. Sometimes also a chivalrous gallant of the feline species ventured its delicate paws upon the streaming pavement, and shook, with a small but dismal

cry, the rain-drops from the pyramidal roofs of its tender ears.

But, save these occasional infringements on its totality, solitude, dark, comfortless, and unrelieved, fell around the creaking footsteps of Mr. Morris Brown. "I wish," soliloquized the worthy broker, "that I had been able advantageously to dispose of this cursed umbrella of the late Lady Waddilove; it is very little calculated for any but a single lady of slender shape, and though it certainly keeps the rain off my hat, it only sends it with a double dripping upon my shoulders. Pish, deuce take the umbrella, I shall catch my death of cold."

These complaints of an affliction, that was assuredly sufficient to irritate the naturally sweet temper of Mr. Brown, only ceased, as that industrious personage paused at the corner of the street, for the purpose of selecting the dryest part through which to effect the miserable

act of crossing to the opposite side. Occupied in stretching his neck over the kennel, in order to take the fullest survey of its topography which the scanty and agitated lamps would allow, the unhappy wanderer lowering his umbrella, suffered a cross and violent gust of wind to rush, as if on purpose, against the interior. The rapidity with which this was done, and the sudden impetus, which gave to the inflated *parapluie* the force of a balloon, happening to occur exactly at the moment Mr. Brown was stooping with such wistful anxiety over the pavement, that gentleman, to his inexpressible dismay, was absolutely lifted, as it were, from his present footing, and immersed in a running rivulet of liquid mire, which flowed immediately below the pavement. Nor was this all—for the wind finding itself somewhat imprisoned in the narrow receptacle it had thus abruptly entered, made so strenuous an exertion to extricate itself, that it turned Lady Waddilove's memorable relic

utterly inside out; so that when Mr. Brown, aghast at the calamity of his immersion, lifted his eyes to heaven, with a devotion that had in it more of expostulation than submission, he beheld by the melancholy lamps, the apparition of his umbrella, the exact opposite to its legitimate conformation, and seeming, with its lengthy stick, and inverted summit, the actual and absolute resemblance of a gigantic wine-glass.

"Now," said Mr. Brown, with that ironical bitterness so common to intense despair, "now, that's what I call pleasant."

As if the elements were guided, and set on by all the departed souls of those whom Mr. Brown had, at any time, over-reached in his profession, scarcely had the afflicted broker uttered this brief sentence, before a discharge of rain, tenfold more heavy than any which had yet fallen, tumbled down in literal torrents upon the defenceless head of the itinerant.

"This won't do," said Mr. Brown, plucking up courage, and splashing out of the little rivulet, once more into *terra firma*, "this won't do—I must find a shelter somewhere.—Dear, dear, how the wet runs down me. I am for all the world like the famous dripping well in Derbyshire. What a beast of an umbrella!—I'll never buy one again of an old lady—hang me if I do."

As the miserable Morris uttered these sentences, which gushed out, one by one, in a broken stream of complaint, he looked round and round—before—behind—beside—for some temporary protection or retreat. In vain—the uncertainty of the light only allowed him to discover houses, in which no portico extended its friendly shelter, and where even the doors seemed divested of the narrow ledge wherewith they are, in more civilized quarters, ordinarily crowned.

"I shall certainly have the rheumatism all

this winter," said Mr. Brown, hurrying onward as fast as he was able. Just, then, glancing desperately down a narrow lane, which crossed his path, he perceived the scaffolding of a house, in which repair or alteration had been at work. A ray of hope flashed across him ; he redoubled his speed, and entering the welcome haven, found himself entirely protected from the storm. The extent of scaffolding was, indeed, rather considerable ; and, though the extreme narrowness of the lane, and the increasing gloom of the night, left Mr. Brown in almost total darkness, so that he could not perceive the exact peculiarities of his situation, yet he was perfectly satisfied with the shelter he had obtained ; and after shaking the rain from his hat—squeezing his coat sleeves and lappets, satisfying himself that it was only about the shoulders that he was thoroughly wetted, and thrusting two pocket-handkerchiefs between his shirt and his

skin, as preventatives to the dreaded rheumatism, Mr. Browne leant luxuriously back against the wall, in the farthest corner of his retreat, and busied himself with endeavouring to restore his insulted umbrella to its original utility of shape.

Our wanderer had been about three minutes in this situation, when he heard the voices of two men, who were hastening along the lane.

"But do stop," said one; and these were the first words distinctly audible to the ear of Mr. Brown—"do stop, the rain can't last much longer, and we have a long way yet to go."

"No, no," said the other, in a voice more imperious, yet better accented than the first, which was evidently plebeian, and somewhat foreign in its tone, "no, we have no time. What signify the inclemencies of weather to men feeding upon an inward and burning thought, and made, by the workings of the

mind, almost callous to the contingencies of the frame?"

"Nay, my very good friend," said the first speaker, with positive, though not disrespectful earnestness, "that may be all very fine for you, who have a constitution like a horse; but I am quite a—what call you it—an invalid—eh! and have had a devilish cough ever since I have been in this d—d country—beg your pardon, no offence to it—so I shall just step under cover of this scaffolding for a few minutes, and if you like the rain so much, my very good friend, why there is plenty of room in the lane to—(ugh—ugh—ugh—) to enjoy it."

As the speaker ended, the dim light just faintly glimmering at the entrance of the friendly shelter, was obscured by his shadow, and presently afterwards, his companion joining him, said—

"Well, if it must be so; but how think you you can be fit to brave all the perils of our scheme, when you shrink, like a palsied crone from the sprinkling of a few water-drops?"

"A few water-*drops*, my very good friend," answered the other, "a few—what call you them —ay—water-*falls* rather—(ugh—ugh—); but let me tell you, my brother citizen, that a man may not like to get his skin wet with water, and would yet thrust his arm up to the very elbow in blood!—(ugh—ugh)."

"The devil!" mentally ejaculated Mr. Brown, who, at the word scheme, had advanced one step from his retreat, but who now, at the last words of the intruder, drew back as gently as a snail into his shell; and although his person was far too much enveloped in shade to run the least chance of detection, yet the honest broker began to feel a little tremor vibrate along the chords of his thrilling frame, and a new ana-

thema against the fatal umbrella rise to his lips.

"Ah!" quoth the second, "I trust that it may be so; but to return to our project—are you quite sure that these two identical ministers are in the *regular* habit of *walking* homeward from that parliament which their despotism has so degraded?"

"Sure—ay, that I am; Davidson swears to it!"

"And you are also sure of their persons, so that, even in the dusk, you can recognize them? for, you know, I have never seen them."

"Sure as five-pence?" returned the first speaker, to whose mind the lives of the persons referred to were of considerably less value than the sum elegantly specified in his metaphorical reply.

"Then," said the other, with a deep, stern

determination of tone—" then shall this hand, by which one of the proudest of our oppressors has already fallen, be made a still worthier instrument of the wrath of Heaven!"

"You are a d—d pretty shot, I believe," quoth the first speaker, as indifferently, as if he were praising the address of a Norfolk squire.

"Never yet did my eye misguide me, or my aim swerve a hair's breadth from its target! I thought once, when I learnt the art as a boy, that in battle, rather than in the execution of a single criminal, that skill would avail me."

"Well, we shall have a glorious opportunity to-morrow night!" answered the first speaker; "that is, if it does not rain so infernally as it does this night: but we shall have a watch of many hours, I dare say."

"That matters but little," replied the other conspirator; "nor even if, night after night,

the same vigil is renewed and baffled, so that it bring its reward at last."

"Right," quoth the first; "I long to be at it! — ugh! ugh! — what a confounded cough I have: it will be my death soon, I'm thinking."

"If so," said the other, with a solemnity which seemed ludicrously horrible, from the strange contrast of the words and object— "die at least with the sacredness of a brave and noble deed upon your conscience and your name!"

"Ugh! ugh!—I am but a man of colour, but I am a patriot, for all that, my good friend! See, the violence of the rain has ceased; we will proceed:" and with these words the worthy pair left the place to darkness and Mr. Brown.

"O, Lord!" said the latter, stepping forth, and throwing, as it were, in that exclamation,

a whole weight of suffocating emotion from his chest—"what bloody miscreants! Murder his Majesty's ministers!—'shoot them like pigeons!'—'d—d pretty shot!' indeed. O, Lord! what *would* the late Lady Waddilove, who always hated even the whigs so cordially, say, if she were alive! But how providential that I should have been here; who knows but I may save the lives of the whole administration, and get a pension, or a little place in the post-office! I'll go to the prime minister directly—this very minute! Pish! i'n't you right now, you cursed thing?" upbraiding the umbrella, which, half right and half wrong, seemed endued with an instinctive obstinacy for the sole purpose of tormenting its owner.

However, losing this petty affliction in the greatness of his present determination, Mr. Brown issued out of his lair, and hastened to put his benevolent and loyal intentions into effect.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"When laurelled ruffians die, the Heaven and Earth,
And the deep Air give warning. Shall the good
Perish and not a sign?"

ANON.

It was the evening after the event recorded in our last chapter; all was hushed and dark in the room where Mordaunt sat alone; the low and falling embers burnt dull in the grate, and through the unclosed windows the high stars rode pale and wan in their career. The room, situated at the back of the house, looked over a small garden, where the sickly and hoar shrubs, overshadowed by a few wintry poplars and grim firs, saddened in the dense atmosphere of fog

and smoke, which ever and ever broods like a black doom over our island city. An air of gloom hung comfortless and chilling over the whole scene externally and within. The room itself was large and old, and its far extremities, mantled as they were with dusk and shadow, impressed upon the mind that involuntary and vague sensation, not altogether unmixed with awe, which the eye, resting upon a view that it can but dimly and confusedly define, so frequently communicates to the heart. There was a strange oppression at Mordaunt's breast, with which he in vain endeavoured to contend. Ever and anon, an icy but passing chill, like the shivers of a fever, shot through his veins, and a wild, and unearthly, and objectless awe stirred through his hair, and his eyes filled with a glassy and cold dew, and sought as by a self-impulsion the shadowy and unpenetrated places around, which momently grew darker and darker. Little

addicted by his peculiar habits to an over-indulgence of the imagination, and still less accustomed to those absolute conquests of the physical frame over the mental, which seem the usual sources of that feeling we call presentiment, Mordaunt rose, and walking to and fro along the room, endeavoured by the exercise to restore to his veins their wonted and healthful circulation. It was past the hour in which his daughter retired to rest; but he was often accustomed to steal up to her chamber, and watch her in her young slumbers; and he felt this night a more than usual desire to perform that office of love. So he left the room, and ascended the stairs. It was a large old house (now a ducal possession) that he tenanted. The staircase was broad, and lighted from above by a glass dome; and as he slowly ascended, and the stars gleamed down still and ghastly upon his steps, he fancied—but he knew not why—

that there was an omen in their gleam. He entered the young Isabel's chamber; there was a light burning within; he stole to her bed, and putting aside the curtain, felt, as he looked upon her peaceful and pure beauty, a cheering warmth gather round his heart. How lovely is the sleep of childhood! What worlds of sweet, yet not utterly sweet associations, does it not mingle with the envy of our gaze! What thoughts, and hopes, and cares, and forebodings does it not excite! There lie in that yet ungrieved and unsullied heart what unnumbered sources of emotion! what deep fountains of passion and woe! Alas! whatever be its earlier triumphs, the victim must fall at last! As the hart which the jackalls pursue, the moment its race is begun, the human prey is foredoomed for destruction, not by the *single* sorrow, but the *thousand* cares; it may baffle one race of pursuers, but a new succeeds; as fast as some drop off exhausted,

spring up others to renew and to perpetuate the chace; and the fated, though flying victim, never escapes—but in death. There was a faint smile upon his daughter's lip, as Mordaunt bent down to kiss it; the dark lash rested on the snowy lid—ah, that tears had no well beneath its surface!—and her breath stole from her rich lips with so regular and calm a motion, that like "the forest leaves," it "seemed stirred with prayer!"* One arm lay over the coverlid, the other pillowed her head, in the unrivalled grace of infancy; that grace which we might almost believe could come from the modelling, though unseen soul, only when the form at rest suffered it more palpably to stir within; and only from *that* soul, whose unchecked and pervading loveliness no art had yet distorted and no guilt alloyed. And the spirit of that fairy and fair

* "And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer."
BYRON.

child had so little of human dross! Her very solitude and separation from others of her age, had surrounded her with an atmosphere where the breath of no ruder sentiment had mingled! Her thoughts seemed scarcely to rest upon the mortal soil which she trod, but might in no exaggerated image, be likened to those birds, the exiles of Eden, which borne upon wings that have yet the blessing of their home, never touch the unholy earth over which their pilgrimage is doomed.

Mordaunt stooped once more, for his heart filled as he gazed upon his child, to kiss her cheek again, and to mingle a blessing with the kiss. When he rose—upon that fair smooth face there was one bright and glistening drop; and Isabel stirred in sleep, and as if suddenly vexed by some painful dream, she sighed deeply as she stirred. It was the last time that the cheek of the young and predestined orphan, was ever

pressed by a father's kiss, or moistened by a father's tear! He left the room silently; no sooner *had* he left it, than as if without the precincts of some charmed and preserving circle, the chill and presentiment at his heart returned. There is a feeling which perhaps all have in a momentary hypochondria felt at times: it is a strong and shuddering impression which Coleridge has embodied in his own dark and supernatural verse, *that something not of earth is behind us*—that if we turned our gaze backward, we should behold that which would make the heart as a bolt of ice, and the eye shrivel and parch within its socket. And so intense is the fancy, that *when* we turn, and all is void, from that very void we could shape a spectre, as fearful as the image our terror had foredrawn! Somewhat such feeling had Mordaunt now, as his steps sounded hollow and echoless on the stairs, and the stars filled the air around him

with their shadowy and solemn presence. Breaking by a violent effort from a spell of which he felt that a frame somewhat overtasked of late was the real enchanter, he turned once more into the room which he had left to visit Isabel. He had engaged his personal attendance to an important motion at the House of Commons for that night, and some political papers were left upon his table which he had promised to give to one of the members of his party. He entered the room, purposing to stay only a minute: an hour passed before he left it; and his servant afterwards observed, that on giving him some orders as he passed through the hall to the carriage, his cheek was as white as marble, and that his step, usually so haughty and firm, reeled and trembled, like a fainting man's. Upon entering the apartment which Mordaunt had quitted, that servant perceived by the window, which was open, three large gouts of fresh blood;

it was a singular circumstance, though perhaps easily accounted for: I mention it as a fact, from which after circumstances appeared to shape out an omen. The stain has never been effaced: I have seen it myself on the bright oak boards; and I have marked, with a cold thrill, the steps of Beauty glide over the very spot, as they hastened to join the dance! Dark and inexplicable Fate! weaver of wild contrasts, demon of this hoary and old world, that movest through it, as a spirit moveth over the waters, filling the depths of things with a solemn mystery, and an everlasting change! thou sweepest over our graves, and Joy is born from the ashes: thou sweepest over Joy, and lo, it is a grave! Engine and tool of the Almighty, whose years cannot fade, thou changest the earth as a garment, and as a vesture it is changed, thou makest it one vast sepulchre and womb united, swallowing and creating life! and

reproducing, over and over, from age to age, from the creation to the creation's doom, the same dust and atoms *which were* our fathers, and which are the sole heirlooms that through countless generations they bequeath and perpetuate to their sons!

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. * THE TANJORE

CHAPTER XIX.

"Methinks, before the issue of our fate,
A spirit moves within us, and impels
The passion of a prophet to our lips."

ANON.

"O vitæ philosophia dux, virtutis indagatrix?"

TULL.

UPON leaving the House of Commons, Mordaunt was accosted by Lord Ulswater, who had just taken his seat in the Upper House. Whatever abstraction, or whatever weakness Mordaunt might have manifested before he had left his home, he had now entirely conquered both; and it was with his usual collected address, that

he replied to Lord Ulswater's salutations, and congratulated him on his change of name, and accession of honours.

It was a night of uncommon calm and beauty; and, although the moon was not visible, the frosty and clear sky, "clad in the lustre of its thousand stars,"* seemed scarcely to mourn either the hallowing light, or the breathing poesy of her presence; and, when Lord Ulswater proposed that Mordaunt should dismiss his carriage, and that they should walk home, Algernon consented not unwillingly to the proposal. He felt, indeed, an unwonted relief in companionship; and the still air, and the deep heavens, seemed to woo him from more unwelcome thoughts, as with a softening and a sister's love.

"Let us, before we return home," said Lord Ulswater, "stroll, for a few moments, towards

* Marlow.

the bridge; I love looking at the river on a night like this."

Whoever inquires into human circumstances, will be struck to find how invariably a latent current of fatality appears to pervade them. It is the turn of the atom in the scale, which makes our safety, or our peril, our glory, or our shame, our sceptre, or our grave! A secret voice at Mordaunt's heart, prompted him to dissent from this proposal, trifling as it seemed, and welcome as it was to his present and peculiar mood: he resisted the voice—the moment passed away, and the last seal was set upon his doom—they moved onward towards the bridge. At first, both were silent, for Lord Ulswater used the ordinary privilege of a lover, and was absent and absorbed, and his companion was never the first to break a taciturnity natural to his habits. At last Lord Ulswater said, "I rejoice that you are now in the sphere of action most likely to

display your talents—you have not spoken yet, I think; indeed, there has been no fitting opportunity, but you will soon, I trust?"

"I know not," said Mordaunt, with a melancholy smile, "whether you judge rightly in thinking the sphere of political exertion one the most calculated for me; but I feel at my heart a foreboding, that my planet is not fated to shine in *any* earthly sphere. Sorrow and misfortune have dimmed it in its birth, and now it is waning towards its decline."

"Its decline!" repeated his companion—"no, rather its meridian. You are in the vigour of your years, the noon of your prosperity, the height of your intellect and knowledge; you require only an effort to add to these blessings the most lasting of all—Fame!"

"Well," said Mordaunt, and a momentary light flashed over his countenance, "the effort *will* be made. I do not pretend not to have

felt ambition. No man should make it his boast, for it often gives to our frail and earth-bound virtue, both its weapon and its wings; but when the soil is exhausted, its produce fails; and when we have forced our hearts to too great an abundance, whether it be of flowers that perish, or of grain that endures, the seeds of after hope bring forth but a languid and scanty harvest. My earliest idol was ambition; but then came others, love and knowledge, and afterwards the desire to bless. That desire you may term ambition: but we will suppose them separate passions; for by the latter I would signify the thirst for glory, either in evil or in good; and the former teaches us, though by little and little, to gain its object, no less in secrecy than for applause; and Wisdom, which opens to us a world, vast, but hidden from the crowd, establishes also over that world an arbiter of its own, so that its disciples grow proud, and

communing with their own hearts, care for no louder judgment than the still voice within. It is thus that indifference, not to the welfare, but to the report of others, grows over us; and often, while we are the most ardent in their cause, we are the least anxious for their esteem."

"And yet," said Lord Ulswater, "I have thought the passion for esteem is the best guarantee for deserving it."

"Nor without justice—other passions may supply its place, and produce the same effects; but the love of true glory is the most legitimate agent of extensive good, and you do right to worship and enshrine it. For me it is dead: it survived—ay, the truth shall out—poverty, want, disappointment, baffled aspirations—all, all, but the deadness, the lethargy of regret: when no one was left, upon this altered earth to animate its efforts, to smile upon its success,

then the last spark quivered and died;—and—and—but forgive me—on this subject I am not often wont to wander. I would say that ambition is for me no more—not so are its effects; but the hope of serving that race, whom I have loved as brothers, but who have never known me—who, by the exterior (and here something bitter mingled with his voice), pass sentence on the heart—in whose eyes I am only the cold, the wayward, the haughty, the morose—the hope of serving them is to me, now, a far stronger passion than ambition was heretofore; and, whatever for that end the love of fame would have dictated, the love of mankind will teach me still more ardently to perform."

They were now upon the bridge—pausing, they leant over, and looked along the scene before them. Dark and hushed, the river flowed sullenly on, save where the reflected stars made a tremulous and broken beam on the

black surface of the water, or the lights of the vast City which lay in shadow on its banks, scattered at capricious intervals, a pale but unpiercing wanness, rather than lustre, along the tide; or, save where the stillness was occasionally broken by the faint oar of the boatman, or the call of his rude voice, mellowed, by distance and the element, into a tone not utterly displeasing.

But behind them as they leant, the feet of passengers, on the great thoroughfare, passed not oft—but quick; and that sound, the commonest of earth's, made—as they lingered—rarer and rarer by the advancing night, contrasted, rather than destroyed, the quiet of the heaven, and the solemnity of the silent stars.

"It is an old, but a just comparison," said Mordaunt's companion, "which has likened life to a river such as we now survey, gliding alternately in light or in darkness, in sunshine

or in storm, to that great ocean in which all waters meet."

"If," said Algernon, with his usual thoughtful and pensive smile, "we may be allowed to vary that simile, I would, separating the universal and eternal course of Destiny from the fleeting generations of human life, compare the river before us to *that* course, and not *it*, but the city scattered on its banks, to the varieties and mutability of life. There (in the latter) crowded together in the great chaos of social union, we herd in the night of ages, flinging the little lustre of our dim lights over the sullen tide which rolls beside us—seeing the tremulous ray glitter on the surface, only to shew us how profound is the gloom which it cannot break, and the depths which it is too faint to pierce. There Crime stalks, and Woe hushes her moan, and Poverty couches, and Wealth riots—and Death, in all and

each, is at his silent work. But the stream of fate, unconscious of our changes and decay, glides on to its engulphing bourne; and while it mirrors the faintest smile or the lightest frown of heaven, beholds, without a change upon its surface, the generations of earth perish, and be renewed along its banks!"

There was a pause: and by an involuntary and natural impulse, they turned from the waves beneath to the heaven, which, in its breathing contrast, spread all eloquently, yet hushed, above. They looked upon the living and intense stars, and felt palpably at their hearts, that spell — wild, but mute — which nothing on or of earth can inspire; that pining of the imprisoned soul, that longing after the immortality on high, which is perhaps no imaginary type of the immortality ourselves are heirs to.

"It is on such nights as these," said Mor-

daunt, who first broke the silence, but with a low and soft voice, "that we are tempted to believe, that in Plato's divine fancy, there is as divine a truth—that, 'our souls are *indeed* of the same essence as the stars,' and that the mysterious yearning, the impatient wish which swells and soars within us to mingle with their glory, is but the instinctive and natural longing to re-unite the divided *portion* of an immortal spirit, stored in these cells of clay, with the original lustre of the heavenly and burning *whole!*"

"And *hence* then," said his companion, pursuing the idea, "might we almost believe in that wondrous and wild influence which the stars have been fabled to exercise over our fate; hence might we shape a visionary clue to their imagined power over our birth, our destinies, and our death."

"Perhaps," rejoined Mordaunt, and Lord

Ulswater has since said, that his countenance, as he spoke, wore an awful and strange aspect, which lived long and long afterwards in the memory of his companion, "perhaps there *are* tokens and signs between the soul and the things of Heaven which do not wholly shame the doctrine of *him** from whose bright wells Plato drew (while he coloured with his own gorgeous errors) the waters of his sublime lore." As Mordaunt thus spoke, his voice changed; he paused abruptly, and pointing to a distant quarter of the heavens, said,

"Look yonder; do you see, in the far horizon, one large and solitary star, that, at this very moment, seems to wax pale and paler, as my hand points to it?"

"I see it—it shrinks and soars, while we gaze, into the farther depths of Heaven, as if it were seeking to rise to some higher orbit."

* Socrates, who taught the belief in omens.

"And do you see," rejoined Mordaunt, "yon fleecy, but dusk cloud, which sweeps slowly along the sky towards it? What shape does that cloud wear to your eyes?"

"It seems to me," answered Lord Ulswater, "to assume the exact semblance of a procession, whether of mirth or burial—the human shape appears to me as distinctly moulded in the thin vapours, as in ourselves; nor, would it perhaps ask too great indulgence from our fancy, to image amongst the darker forms in the centre of the cloud, one bearing the very appearance *of a bier*—the plume, and the caparison, and the steeds, and the mourners! Still, as I look, the likeness seems to me to increase!"

"Strange," said Mordaunt, musingly, "how strange is this thing which we call the mind! Strange that the dreams and superstitions of childhood should cling to it with so inseparable and fond a strength! I remember, years since,

that I was affected even as I am now, to a degree which wiser men might shrink to confess, upon gazing on a cloud exactly similar to that which at this instant we behold. But see—that cloud has passed over the star; and now, as it rolls away, look, the star itself has vanished into the heavens."

"But I fear," answered Lord Ulswater, with a slight smile, "that we can deduce no omen either from the cloud or the star: would, indeed, that Nature *were* more visibly knit with our individual existence! Would that in the heavens there *were* a book, and in the waves a voice, and on the earth a token, of the mysteries and enigmas of our fate!"

"And yet," said Mordaunt, slowly, as his mind gradually rose from its dream-like oppression to its wonted and healthful tone, "yet, in truth, we want neither sign nor omen from other worlds to teach us all that it is the end of exist-

ence to fulfil in this; and that seems to me a far less exalted wisdom which enables us to solve the *riddles*, than that which elevates us above the *chances* of the future."

"But *can* we be placed above those chances—can we become independent of that fate to which the ancients taught that even their deities were submitted?"

"Let us not so wrong the ancients," answered Mordaunt; "their poets taught it, not their philosophers. Would not Virtue be a dream, a mockery indeed, if it were, like the herb of the field, a thing of blight and change, of withering and renewal, a minion of the sunbeam and the cloud? Shall calamity deject it? Shall prosperity pollute? *then*, let it not be the object of our aspiration, but the byword of our contempt. No: let us rather believe with the great of old, that *when it is based on wisdom*, it is throned above change and chance! throned above the

things of a petty and sordid world! throned above the Olympus of the heathen! throned above the Stars which fade, and the Moon which waneth in her course! Shall *we* believe less of the divinity of Virtue, than an Athenian Sage? Shall *we*, to whose eyes have been revealed without a cloud, the blaze and the glory of heaven, make Virtue a slave to those chains of earth which the Pagan subjected to her feet? But if by *her* we can trample on the ills of life, are we not, a hundredfold more, by her, the vanquishers of death? All creation lies before us: shall we cling to a grain of dust? All immortality is our heritage: shall we gasp and sicken for a moment's breath? *What if we perish within an hour*—what if already the black cloud lowers over us—what if from our hopes and projects, and the fresh-woven ties which we have knit around our life, we are abruptly torn, shall we be the creatures or the conquerors of fate?

Shall we be the exiled from a home, or the escaped from a dungeon? Are we not as birds, which look into the Great Air only through a barred cage? Shall we shrink and mourn when the cage is shattered, and all space spreads around us—our element and our empire? No, it was not for this that, in an elder day, Virtue and Valour received but a common name! The soul, into which *that* Spirit has breathed its glory, is not only above Fate—it profits by her assaults! Attempt to weaken it, and you nerve it with a new strength—to wound it, and you render it more invulnerable—to destroy it, and you make it immortal! This, indeed, is the Sovereign whose realm every calamity increases—the Hero whose triumph every invasion augments!—Standing on the last sands of life, and encircled by the advancing waters of darkness and eter-

nity, it becomes, in its expiring effort, *doubly* the Victor and the King !"

Impressed, by the fervour of his companion, with a sympathy almost approaching to awe, Lord Ulswater pressed Mordaunt's hand, but offered no reply ; and both, excited by the high theme of their conversation, and the thoughts which it produced, moved in silence from their post, and walked slowly homeward.

CHAPTER XX.

"Is it possible?
Is't so? I *can* no longer what I *would*:
No longer draw back at my liking! I
Must do the deed because I thought of it.
* * * *
What is thy enterprise—thy aim—thy object?
Hast honestly confessed it to thyself?
* * * *
O bloody, frightful deed!
* * * *
Was that my purpose when we parted?
O God of Justice!"

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein.*

WE need scarcely say that one of the persons overheard by Mr. Brown was Wolfe, and the peculiar tone of oratorical exaggeration, characteristic of the man, has already informed

the reader with which of the two he was identified.

On the evening after that conversation—the evening fixed for the desperate design on which he had set the last hazard of his life—the republican, parting from the companions with whom he had passed the day, returned home to compose the fever of his excited thoughts, and have a brief hour of solitary meditation, previous to the committal of that act which he knew must be his immediate passport to the gaol and the gibbet. On entering his squalid and miserable home, the woman of the house, a blear-eyed and filthy hag, who was holding to her withered breast an infant, which, even in sucking the stream that nourished its tainted existence, betrayed upon its haggard and bloated countenance the polluted nature of the mother's milk, from which it drew at once the support of life and the seeds of death—this

woman, meeting him in the narrow passage, arrested his steps, to acquaint him that a gentleman had that day called upon him, and left a letter in his room, with strict charge of care and speed in its delivery. The visitor had not, however, communicated his name, though the curiosity excited by his mien and dress had prompted the crone particularly to demand it.

Little affected by this incident, which to the hostess seemed no unimportant event, Wolfe pushed the woman aside, with an impatient gesture, and, scarcely conscious of the abuse which followed this motion, hastened up the sordid stairs to his apartment. He sate himself down upon the foot of his bed, and, covering his face with his hands, surrendered himself to the tide of contending emotions which rushed upon him.

What was he about to commit? Murder! —murder in its coldest and most premeditated

guise! "No!" cried he aloud, starting from the bed, and dashing his clenched hand violently against his brow—"no—no—no! it is not murder, it is justice! Did not they, the hirelings of Oppression, ride over their crushed and shrieking countrymen, with drawn blades and murtherous hands? Was I not among them at that hour? Did I not with these eyes see the sword uplifted, and the smiter strike? Were not my ears filled with the groans of their victims and the savage yells of the trampling dastards?—yells which rung in triumph over women, and babes, and weaponless men? And shall there be no vengeance? Yes, it shall fall, not upon the tools, but the master—not upon the slaves, but the despot! Yet," said he, suddenly pausing, as his voice sank into a whisper, "assassination!—in another hour, perhaps—a deed irrevocable—a seal set upon two souls—the victim's and the judge's! Fetters and the

felon's cord before me!—the shouting mob—the stigma!—no, no, it will *not* be the stigma; the gratitude, rather, of future times, when motives will be appreciated and party hushed! Have I not wrestled with wrong from my birth?—have I not rejected all offers from the men of an impious power?—have I made a moment's truce with the poor man's foe?—have I not thrice purchased free principles with an imprisoned frame?...have I not bartered my substance, and my hopes, and the pleasures of this world for my unmoving, unswerving faith to the Great Cause?—am I not about to crown all by one blow—one lightning blow, destroying at once myself and a criminal too mighty for the law?—and shall not history do justice to this devotedness — this absence from all self hereafter—and admire, even if it condemn?"

Buoying himself with these reflections, and exciting the jaded current of his designs once

more into an unnatural impetus, the unhappy man ceased, and paced with rapid steps the narrow limits of his chamber: his eye fell upon something bright, which glittered amidst the darkening shadows of the evening. At that sight his heart stood still for a moment; it was the weapon of intended death; he took it up, and as he surveyed the shining barrel, and felt the lock, a more settled sternness gathered at once over his fierce features and stubborn heart. The pistol had been bought and prepared for the purpose, with the utmost nicety, not only for use but show; nor is it unfrequent to find in such instances of premeditated ferocity in design, a fearful kind of coxcombry lavished upon the means.

Striking a light, Wolfe reseated himself deliberately, and began, with the utmost care, to load the pistol; that scene would not have been an unworthy sketch for those painters who

possess the power of giving to the low a force almost approaching to grandeur, and of augmenting the terrible, by a mixture of the ludicrous; the sordid chamber, the damp walls, the high window, in which a handful of discoloured paper supplied the absence of many a pane; the single table of rough oak, the rush-bottomed and broken chair, the hearth unconscious of a fire, over which a mean bust of Sidney, and a miserable print of Hampden held their tutelary sway—while the dull rushlight streamed dimly upon the swarthy and strong countenance of Wolfe, intent upon his work—a countenance in which the deliberate calmness that had succeeded the late struggle of feeling had in it a mingled power of energy and haggardness of languor, the one of the desperate design, the other of the exhausted body, while in the knit brow, and the iron lines and even in the settled ferocity of expression, there was yet something above the

stamp of the vulgar ruffian—something eloquent of the motive no less than the deed, and significant of that not ignoble perversity of mind which diminished the guilt, yet increased the dreadness of the meditated crime, by mocking it with the name of virtue.

As he had finished his task, and, hiding the pistol in his person, waited for the hour in which his accomplice was to summon him to the fatal deed, he perceived, close by him, on the table, the letter which the woman had spoken of, and which, till then, he had, in the excitement of his mind, utterly forgotten. He opened it mechanically—an inclosure fell to the ground. He picked it up—it was a bank-note of considerable amount. The lines in the letter were few, anonymous, and written in a hand evidently disguised. They were calculated peculiarly to touch the republican, and reconcile him to the gift. In them the writer professed

to be actuated by no other feeling than admiration for the unbending integrity which had characterized Wolfe's life, and the desire that sincerity in any principles, however they might differ from his own, should not be rewarded only with indigence and ruin.

It is impossible to tell how far, in Wolfe's mind, his own desperate fortunes might, insensibly, have mingled with the motives which led him to his present design: certain it is, that, wherever the future is hopeless, the mind is easily converted from the rugged to the criminal; and equally certain it is, that we are apt to justify to ourselves many offences in a cause where we have made great sacrifices: and, perhaps, if this unexpected assistance had come to Wolfe a short time before, it might, by softening his heart, and reconciling him in some measure to fortune, have rendered him less susceptible to the fierce voice of political hatred

and the instigation of his associates. Nor can we, who are removed from the temptations of the poor—temptations to which ours are as breezes which woo, to storms which "tumble towers"—nor can we tell how far the acerbity of want, and the absence of wholesome sleep, and the indignity of the rich, and the rankling memory of better fortunes, or even the mere fierceness which absolute hunger produces in the humours and veins of all that hold nature's life —nor can we tell how far these madden the temper, which is but a minion of the body, and plead in irresistible excuse for the crimes which our wondering virtue—haughty because unsolicited—stamps with its loftiest reprobation!

The cloud fell from Wolfe's brow, and his eye gazed, musingly and rapt, upon vacancy. Steps were heard ascending—the voice of a distant clock tolled with a distinctness which seemed like strokes palpable as well as audible

to the senses; and as the door opened, and his accomplice entered, Wolfe muttered—"Too late—too late!"—and first crushing the note in his hands, then tore it into atoms, with a vehemence which astonished his companion, who, however, knew not its value.

"Come," said he, stamping his foot violently upon the floor, as if to conquer by passion all internal relenting—"come, my friend, not another moment is to be lost; let us hasten to our holy deed!"

"I trust," said Wolfe's companion, when they were in the open street, "that we shall not have our trouble in vain; it is a brave night for it! Davidson wanted us to throw grenades into the ministers' carriages, as the best plan; and, faith, we can try that if all else fails!"

Wolfe remained silent—indeed he scarcely heard his companion; for a sullen indifference to all things around him, had wrapt his

spirit—that singular feeling, or rather absenc from feeling, common to all men, when goin to any exciting action, upon which their mind are already and wholly bent, which render them utterly without thought, when the superfi cial would imagine they were the most full of it and leads them to the threshold of that event which had before engrossed all their most wakin and fervid contemplation, with a blind anc mechanical unconsciousness, resembling the in fluence of a dream.

They arrived at the place they had selectec for their station—sometimes walking to-and fro, in order to escape observation—some-times hiding behind the pillars of a neighbouring house, they awaited the coming of their victims. The time passed on—the streets grew more and more empty; and, at last, only the visitation of the watchman—or the occasional steps of some

homeward wanderer disturbed the solitude of their station.

At last, just after midnight, two men were seen approaching towards them, linked arm-in-arm, and walking very slowly.

" Hist—hist," whispered Wolfe's comrade—" there they are at last—is your pistol cocked?"

" Ay," answered Wolfe, " and your's: man—collect yourself—your hand shakes."

" It is with the cold, then," said the ruffian, using, unconsciously, a celebrated reply—" Let us withdraw behind the pillar."

They did so—the figures approached them; the night, though star-lit, was not sufficiently clear to give the assassins more than the outline of their shapes, and the character of their height and air.

" Which," said Wolfe, in a whisper—for, as he had said, he had never seen either of his intended victims—" which is *my* prey?"

"Oh, the nearest to you," said the other, with trembling accents; "you know his d——d proud walk, and erect head—that is the way he answers the people's petitions, I'll be sworn. The taller and farther one, who stoops more in his gait, is mine."

The strangers were now near at hand.

"You know you are to fire first, Wolfe," whispered the nearer ruffian, whose heart had long failed him, and who was already meditating escape.

"But are you sure—quite sure, of the identity of our prey?" said Wolfe, grasping his pistol.

"Yes, yes," said the other; and, indeed, the air of the nearest person approaching them bore, in the distance, a strong resemblance to that of the minister it was supposed to designate. His companion, who appeared much younger, and of a mien equally patrician, but far less proud,

seemed listening to the supposed minister with the most earnest attention. Apparently occupied with their conversation, when about twenty yards from the assassins, they stood still for a few moments.

"Stop, Wolfe, stop," said the republican's accomplice, whose Indian complexion, by fear, and the wan light of the lamps and skies, faded into a jaundiced and yellow hue, while the bony whiteness of his teeth made a grim contrast with the glare of his small, black, sparkling eyes.

"Stop, Wolfe—hold your hand. I see, now, that I was mistaken; the farther one is a stranger to me, and the nearer one is much thinner than the minister: pocket your pistol—quick—quick—and let us withdraw."

Wolfe dropped his hand, as if dissuaded from his design; but, as he looked upon the trembling frame and chattering teeth of his terrified accomplice, a sudden, and not unnatural, idea

darted across his mind, that he was wilfully deceived by the fears of his companion; and that the strangers, who had now resumed their way, were indeed what his accomplice had first reported them to be. Filled with this impression, and acting upon the momentary spur which it gave, the infatuated and fated man pushed aside his comrade, with a muttered oath at his cowardice and treachery, and taking a sure and steady, though quick, aim at the person, who was now just within the certain destruction of his hand, he fired the pistol. The stranger reeled, and fell into the arms of his companion.

"Hurra!" cried the murderer, leaping from his hiding place, and walking with rapid strides towards his victim—"hurra! for liberty and England."

Scarce had he uttered those prostituted names, before the triumph of misguided zeal

faded suddenly and for ever from his brow and soul.

The wounded man leaned back in the supporting arms of his chilled and horror-stricken friend; who, kneeling on one knee to support him, fixed his eager eyes upon the pale and changing countenance of his burthen, unconscious of the presence of the assassin.

"Speak, Mordaunt, speak! how is it with you?" he said.

Recalled from his torpor by the voice, Mordaunt opened his eyes, and muttering "my child, my child," sunk back again; and Lord Ulswater (for it was he) felt by his increased weight, that death was hastening rapidly on its victim.

"Oh!" said he, bitterly, and recalling their last conversation—"Oh! where—where—when this man—the wise, the kind, the innocent, almost the perfect, falls thus in the very prime

of existence, by a sudden blow from an obscure hand—unblest in life, inglorious in death—oh! where—where is this boasted triumph of Virtue, or where is its reward?"

True to his idol at the last, as these words fell upon his dizzy and receding senses, Mordaunt raised himself by a sudden, though momentary, exertion; and fixing his eyes full upon Lord Ulswater, his moving lips (for his voice was already gone) seemed to shape out the answer, "*It is here!*" With this last effort, and with an expression upon his aspect, which seemed at once to soften and to hallow the haughty and calm character which in life it was wont to bear, Algernon Mordaunt fell once more back into the arms of his companion, and immediately expired.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Come Death, these are thy victims; and the axe
Waits those who claimed the chariot.—Thus we count
Our treasures in the dark; and when the light
Breaks on the cheated eye, we find the coin
Was skulls.——

* * * * *

"Yet the while
Fate links strange contrasts, and the scaffold's gloom
Is neighboured by the altar."

ANON.

WHEN Crauford's guilt and imprisonment became known; when Inquiry developed, day after day, some new maze in the mighty and intricate machinery of his sublime dishonesty; when houses of the most reputed wealth and

profuse splendour, whose affairs Crauford had transacted, were discovered to have been for years utterly undermined and beggared, and only supported by the extraordinary genius of the individual, by whose extraordinary guilt, now no longer concealed, they were suddenly and irretrievably destroyed; when it was ascertained that, for nearly the fifth part of a century, a system of villainy had been carried on throughout Europe, in a thousand different relations, without a single breath of suspicion, and yet which a single breath of suspicion could at once have arrested and exposed; when it was proved that a man, whose luxury had exceeded the pomp of princes, and whose wealth was supposed more inexhaustible than the enchanted purse of Fortunatus, had for eighteen years been a pennyless pensioner upon the prosperity of others; when the long scroll

of this almost incredible fraud was slowly, piece by piece, unrolled before the terrified curiosity of the public, an invading army at the Temple gates could scarcely have excited such universal consternation and dismay.

The mob, always the first to execute justice, in their own inimitable way, took vengeance upon Crauford, by burning the house no longer his, and the houses of the partners, who were the worst and most innocent sufferers for his crime. No epithet of horror and hatred was too severe for the offender; and serious apprehensions for the safety of Newgate, his present habitation, were generally expressed. The more saintly members of that sect to which the hypocrite had ostensibly belonged, held up their hands, and declared that the fall of the Pharisee was a judgment of Providence. Nor did they think it worth while to make, for a moment, the

trifling inquiry, how far the judgment of Providence was also implicated in the destruction of the numerous and innocent families he had ruined.

But, whether from that admiration for genius, common to the vulgar, which forgets all crime in the cleverness of committing it, or from that sagacious disposition peculiar to the English, to make a lion and a hero of any person eminently wicked, no sooner did Crauford's trial come on, than the tide of popular feeling experienced a sudden revulsion. It became, in an instant, the fashion to admire and to pity a gentleman so *talented* and so *unfortunate.* Likenesses of Mr. Crauford appeared in every print-shop in town—the papers discovered that he was the very facsimile of the great King of Prussia. The laureate made an ode upon him, which was set to music; and the public

learnt, with tears of compassionate regret at so romantic a circumstance, that pigeon-pies were sent daily to his prison, made by the delicate hands of one of his former mistresses. Some sensation, also, was excited by the circumstance of his poor wife (who soon afterwards died of a broken heart) coming to him in prison, and being with difficulty torn away; but then, conjugal affection is so very common-place, and there was something so engrossingly pathetic in the anecdote of the pigeon-pies!

It must be confessed, that Crauford displayed singular address and ability upon his trial; and fighting every inch of ground, even to the last, when so strong a phalanx of circumstances appeared against him, that no hope of a favourable verdict could for a moment have supported him—he concluded the trial with a speech delivered by himself—so impressive, so powerful, so dignified, yet so impassioned, that

the whole audience, hot as they were, dissolved into tears.

Sentence was passed—death! But such was the infatuation of the people, that every one expected that a pardon, for crime more complicated and extensive than half the Newgate Calendar could equal, would of course be obtained. Persons of the highest rank interested themselves in his behalf; and up to the night before his execution, expectations, almost amounting to certainty, were entertained by the criminal, his friends, and the public. On that night was conveyed to Crauford the positive and peremptory assurance that there was no hope. Let us now enter his cell, and be the sole witnesses of his solitude.

Crauford was, as we have seen, a man in some respects of great *moral* courage, of extraordinary daring in the formation of schemes, of unwavering resolution in supporting them, and

of a temper which rather rejoiced in, than shunned the braving of a distant danger for the sake of an adequate reward. But this courage was supported and fed solely by the self-persuasion of consummate genius, and his profound confidence, both in his good fortune, and the inexhaustibility of his resources. *Physically*, he was a coward! *immediate* peril to be confronted by the *person*, not the *mind*, had ever appalled him like a child. He had never dared to back a spirited horse. He had been known to remain for days in an obscure alehouse in the country, to which a shower had accidentally driven him, because it had been idly reported that a wild beast had escaped from a caravan, and been seen in the vicinity of the inn. No dog had ever been allowed in his household, lest it *might* go mad. In a word, Crauford was one to whom life and sensual enjoyments were

every thing—the supreme blessings—the only blessings.

As long as he had the hope, and it was a sanguine hope, of *saving* life, nothing had disturbed his mind from its serenity. His gaiety had never forsaken him; and his cheerfulness and fortitude had been the theme of every one admitted to his presence. But when this hope was abruptly and finally closed—when death, immediate and unavoidable—death—the extinction of existence—the *cessation of sense*, stood bare and hideous before him, his genius seemed at once to abandon him to his fate, and the inherent weakness of his nature to gush over every prop and barrier of his art.

"No hope!" muttered he, in a voice of the keenest anguish—"no hope—merciful God—none—none! What, I—*I*—who have shamed kings in luxury—I to die on the gibbet, among the reeking, gaping, swinish crowd with whom—.

Oh God, that I were one of *them* even! that I were the most loathsome beggar that ever crept forth to taint the air with sores!—that I were a toad immured in a stone, sweltering in the atmosphere of its own venom!—a snail crawling on these very walls, and tracking his painful path in slime!—any thing—any thing, but death! And *such* death—the gallows—the scaffold—the halter—the fingers of the hangman padling round the neck where the softest caresses have clung *and sated.* To die—die—die! What, *I* whose pulse now beats so strongly—whose blood keeps so warm and vigorous a motion!—in the very prime of enjoyment and manhood—all life's million paths of pleasure before me—to die—to swing to the winds—to hang—ay—ay—to hang!—to be cut down, distorted and hideous—to be thrust into the earth with worms—to rot, or—or—or hell!

—is there a hell—*better that, even, than annihilation!*

"Fool—fool!—damnable fool that I was (and in his sudden rage he clenched his own flesh till the nails met in it); had I but got to France one day sooner! Why don't you save me—save me—you whom I have banquetted, and feasted, and lent money to!—one word from you might have saved me—I will not die! I don't deserve it!—I am innocent!—I tell you not guilty, my lord—not guilty! Have you no hearts, no consciences?—murder—murder—murder!" and the wretched man sunk upon the ground, and tried, with his hands, to grasp the stone floor, as if to cling to it from some imaginary violence.

Turn we from him to the cell in which another criminal awaits also the awful coming of his latest morrow.

Pale, motionless, silent—with his face bending over his bosom, and hands clasped tightly upon his knees, Wolfe sat in his dungeon, and collected his spirit against the approaching consummation of his turbulent and stormy fate—his bitterest punishment had been already past; mysterious Chance, or rather the Power above Chance, had denied to him the haughty triumph of self-applause. No sophistry, now, could compare his doom to that of Sidney, or his deed to the act of the avenging Brutus.

Murder — causeless — objectless—universally execrated—rested, and would rest (till oblivion wrapt it) upon his name. It had appeared, too, upon his trial, that he had, in the information he had received, been the mere tool of a spy, in the ministers' pay; and that, for weeks before his intended deed, his design had been known, and his conspiracy only not bared to the public eye, because political craft awaited a

riper opportunity for the disclosure. He had not then merely been the blind dupe of his own passions, but, more humbling still, an instrument in the hands of the very men whom his hatred was sworn to destroy. Not a wreck—not a straw, of the vain glory, for which he had forfeited life, and risked his soul, could he hug to a sinking heart, and say—"This is my support."

The remorse of gratitude embittered his cup still farther. On Mordaunt's person had been discovered a memorandum of the money, anonymously enclosed to Wolfe on the day of the murder; and it was couched in words of esteem which melted the fierce heart of the republican into the only tears he had shed since childhood. From that time a sullen, silent spirit fell upon him. He spoke to none—heeded none: he made no defence in trial—no complaint of severity—no appeal from judgment. The iron had entered

into his soul—but it supported, while it tortured. Even now, as we gaze upon his inflexible and dark countenance, no transitory emotion—no natural spasm of sudden fear for the catastrophe of the morrow—no intense and working passions, struggling into calm—no sign of internal hurricanes, rising, as it were, from the hidden depths, agitate the surface, or betray the secrets of the unfathomable world within. The mute lip—the rigid brow—the downcast eye—a heavy and dread stillness, brooding over every feature—these are all that we behold!

Is it that thought sleeps, locked in the torpor of a senseless and rayless dream; or that an evil incubus weighs upon it, crushing its risings, but deadening not its pangs? Does Memory fly to the green fields, and happy home of his childhood, or the lonely studies of his daring and restless youth, or his earliest homage to that Spirit of Freedom, which shone bright, and still,

and pure, upon the solitary chamber of him who sung of heaven ;* or (dwelling on its last and most fearful object) rolls it only through one tumultuous and convulsive channel—Despair! Whatever be within the silent and deep heart —pride, or courage, or callousness, or that stubborn firmness, which once principle has grown habit, cover all as with a pall ; and the strung nerves, and the hard endurance of the human flesh, sustain what the immortal mind perhaps quails beneath, in its dark retreat, but once dreamt that it would glory to bear.

The fatal hour had come ! and, through the long dim passages of the prison, four criminals were led forth to execution. The first was Crauford's associate, Bradley. This man prayed fervently ; and, though he was trembling and pale, his mien and aspect bore something of the calmness of resignation.

* Milton

It has been said that there is no friendship among the wicked. We have examined this maxim closely, and believe it to be, like most popular proverbs, false. In wickedness there is peril —and mutual peril is the strongest of ties. At all events, the wicked can, not unoften, excite an attachment in their followers, denied to virtue. Habitually courteous, caressing, and familiar, Crauford had, despite of his own suspicions of Bradley, really touched the heart of one, whom weakness and want, not nature, had gained to vice; and it was not till Crauford's guilt was by other witnesses undeniably proved, that Bradley could be tempted to make any confession tending to implicate him.

He now crept close to his former partner, and frequently clasped his hand, and besought him to take courage, and to pray. But Crauford's eye was glassy and dim, and his veins seemed filled with water—so numbed, and cold,

and white, was his cheek. Fear, in him, had passed its paroxysm, and was now insensibility; it was only when they urged him to pray that a sort of benighted consciousness strayed over his countenance, and his ashen lips muttered something which none heard.

After him came the Creole, who had been Wolfe's accomplice. On the night of the murder, he had taken advantage of the general loneliness, and the confusion of the few present, and fled. He was found, however, fast asleep, in a garret, before morning, by the officers of justice; and, on trial, he had confessed all. This man was in a rapid consumption. The delay of another week would have given to nature the termination of his life. He, like Bradley, seemed earnest and absorbed in prayer.

Last came Wolfe, his tall, gaunt frame, worn, by confinement and internal conflict, into a gigantic skeleton; his countenance, too, had

undergone a withering change; his grizzled hair seemed now to have acquired only the one hoary hue of age; and, though you might trace in his air and eye the sternness, you could no longer detect the fire of former days. Calm, as on the preceding night, no emotion broke over his dark, but not defying features. He rejected, though not irreverently, all aid from the benevolent priest, and seemed to seek, in the pride of his own heart, a substitute for the resignation of Religion.

"Miserable man!" at last, said the good clergyman, in whom zeal overcame kindness, "have you, at this awful hour, no prayer upon your lips?"

A living light shot then for a moment over Wolfe's eye and brow. "I have!" said he; and, raising his clasped hands to heaven, he continued, in the memorable words of Sidney—"'Lord, defend thy own cause, and defend those

who defend it! Stir up such as are faint; direct those that are willing; confirm those that waver; give wisdom and integrity to all: order all things so as may most redound to thine own glory!' "

"I had once hoped," added Wolfe, sinking in his tone—"I had once hoped that I might with justice have continued that holy prayer;* but—" he ceased abruptly: the glow passed from his countenance, his lip quivered, and the tears stood in his eyes: that was the only weakness he betrayed, and those were his last words.

Crauford continued, even while the rope was put round him, mute and unconscious of every thing.

* "Grant that I may die glorifying thee for all thy mercies, and that at the last thou hast permitted me to be singled out as a witness of thy truth, and even by the confession of my opposers for that OLD CAUSE in which I was from my youth engaged, and for which thou hast often and wonderfully declared thyself."

ALGERNON SIDNEY.

It was said that his pulse (that of an uncommonly strong and healthy man on the previous day), had become so low and faint, that, an hour before his execution, it could not be felt. He and the Creole were the only ones who struggled: Wolfe died, seemingly, without a pang.

From these feverish and fearful scenes, the mind turns, with a feeling of grateful relief, to contemplate the happiness of one whose candid and high nature, and warm affections, Fortune, long *befriending*, had at length *blest*.

It was on an evening in the earliest flush of returning spring, that Lord Ulswater, with his beautiful bride, entered his magnificent domains. It had been his wish and order, in consequence of his brother's untimely death, that no public rejoicings should be made on his marriage; but the good old steward could not persuade himself entirely to enforce obedience to the first

order of his new master; and as the carriage drove into the park-gates, crowds on crowds were assembled, to welcome and to gaze.

No sooner had they caught a glimpse of their young lord, whose affability and handsome person had endeared him to all who remembered his early days, and of the half blushing, half smiling countenance beside him, than their enthusiasm could be no longer restrained. The whole scene rang with shouts of joy—the horses were removed from the carriage, and, over a path strewed with boughs and such flowers as the young year afforded—through an air filled with blessings, and amidst an avenue of happy faces, the bridal pair were dragged in triumph to their home.

"Ah! Clarence, (for so I *must* still call you,") said Flora, her beautiful eyes streaming with delicious tears, "let us never leave these

kind hearts; let us live amongst them, and strive to repay and deserve the blessings which they shower upon us! Is not Benevolence, dearest, better than Ambition?"

"Can it not rather, my own Flora, be Ambition itself?"

CONCLUSION.

"So rest you, merry gentlemen."

Monsieur Thomas.

We have now only to take our leave of the less important characters whom we have assembled together; and then, all due courtesy to our numerous guests being performed, to retire ourselves to repose.

First, then, for Mr. Morris Brown:—In the second year of Lord Ulswater's marriage, the worthy broker paid Mrs. Minden's nephew a visit, in which he persuaded that gentleman to accept, "as presents," two admirable fire-screens, the property of the late Lady Waddilove: the same may be now seen in the house-keeper's room, at Borodaile Park, by any per-

son willing to satisfy his curiosity and the house-keeper. Of all farther particulars respecting Mr. Morris Brown, history is silent.

In the obituary for 1792, we find the following paragraph:—"Died, at his house in Putney, aged seventy-three, Sir Nicholas Copperas, Knt., a gentleman well known on the Exchange for his facetious humour. Several of his *bons-mots* are still recorded in the Common Council.—When residing, many years ago, in the suburbs of London, this worthy gentleman was accustomed to go from his own house to the Exchange in a coach called 'the Swallow,' that passed his door just at breakfast-time; upon which occasion he was wont wittily to observe to his accomplished spouse—'And now, Mrs. Copperas, having swallowed in the roll, I will e'en roll in the Swallow!' His whole property is left to Adolphus Copperas, Esq., Banker."

And in the next year we discover—

"Died, on Wednesday last, at her jointure house, Putney, in her sixty-eighth year, the amiable and elegant Lady Copperas—relict of the late Sir Nicholas, Knt."

Lord Aspeden was a frequent guest at the house of Lord Ulswater, delighting every one with his graceful urbanity. By a note of the latter, (dated twenty-four years after his marriage, and now in our possession), we find his lordship attributed the failure of his eldest son in an election for the county, entirely to the envy excited by some courtly compliment of our *ci-devant* Minister; we may, therefore, conclude that this polished Diplomatist arrived at a good old age.

Mr. Trollylop having exhausted the whole world of metaphysics, died, like Descartes, "in believing he had left nothing unexplained."

Mr. Callythorpe entered the House of Commons, at the time of the French Revolution.

He distinguished himself by many votes in favour of Mr. Pitt, and one speech which ran thus: "Sir, I believe my honourable friend who spoke last (Mr. Pitt), designs to ruin the country; but I will support him through all! Honourable Gentlemen may laugh—but I'm a true Briton, and will not serve my friend the less because I scorn to flatter him."

The Prince Pietro d'Urbini, del' Orbino, or Urbino, whose name every one pronounced differently, and whom, because a foreigner and a prince, every patriotic and free Briton naturally idolized, having, on his return home, most scandalously thought proper to quarrel with his butler, was solemnly declared, in parliament, a national enemy; and, accordingly, we were going to war with him, when, unluckily for us, he was suddenly assassinated.

Sir Christopher Findlater lost his life, by an accident arising from the upset of his carriage;

his good heart not having suffered him to part with a drunken coachman.

Mr. Glumford turned miser in his old age; and died of want, and an extravagant son.

Our honest Cole and his wife, were always among the most welcome visitors at Lord Ulswater's. In his extreme old age, the ex-king took a journey to Scotland, to see the Author of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." Nor should we do justice to the chief's critical discernment, if we neglected to record, that, from the earliest dawn of that great luminary of our age, he predicted its meridian splendour. The eldest son of the gipsy-monarch inherited his father's spirit, and is yet alive, a general, and G. C. B.

Mr. Harrison married Miss Elizabeth, and succeeded to the Golden Fleece.

The Duke of Haverfield and Lord Ulswater continued their friendship through life; and the letters of our dear Flora to her correspondent,

Eleanor, did not cease, even with that critical and perilous period to all maiden correspondence—Marriage. If we may judge from the subsequent letters which we have been permitted to see, Eleanor never repented her brilliant nuptials, nor discovered (as the Duchess of —— once said from experience), " that dukes are as intolerable for husbands, as they are delightful for matches."

And Isabel Mordaunt ?—Ah ! not in these pages shall *her* history be told even in epitome. Perhaps for some future narrative, her romantic and eventful fate may be reserved. Suffice it for the present, that the childhood of the young heiress passed in the house of Lord Ulswater, whose proudest boast, through a triumphant and prosperous life, was to have been her father's friend ; and that as she grew up, she inherited her mother's beauty and gentle heart, and seemed to bear in her deep eyes and melancholy smile,

some remembrance of the scenes in which her first infancy had been passed.

But for Him, the husband and the father, whose trials through this wrong world I have portrayed—for him let there be neither murmurs at the blindness of Fate, nor sorrow at the darkness of his doom. Better that the lofty and bright spirit should pass away before the petty business of life had bowed it, or the sordid mists of this low earth breathed a shadow on its lustre! Who would have asked *that* spirit to have struggled on for years, in the intrigues—the hopes—the objects of meaner souls? Who would have desired that the heavenward and impatient heart, should have grown inured to the chains and toil of this enslaved state, or hardened into the callousness of age? Nor would we claim the vulgar pittance of compassion for a lot which is exalted *above* regret! Pity is for our weaknesses—to our weaknesses only be it given. It is the aliment of love—it is

the wages of ambition—it is the rightful heritage of error! But why should pity be entertained for the soul which never fell?—for the courage which never quailed?—for the majesty never humbled?—for the wisdom which, from the rough things of the common world, raised an empire above earth and destiny?—for the stormy life?—it was a triumph!—for the early death?—it was an immortality!

I have stood beside Mordaunt's tomb: his will had directed that he should sleep not in the vaults of his haughty line—and his last dwelling is surrounded by a green and pleasant spot. The trees shadow it like a temple; and a silver though fitful brook wails with a constant, yet not ungrateful dirge, at the foot of the hill on which the tomb is placed. I have stood there in those ardent years when our wishes know no boundary, and our ambition no curb; yet, even then I would have changed my wildest vision of romance for that quiet grave, and the

dreams of the distant spirit whose relics reposed beneath it!

To you who have gone with him through a journey that has, perchance, often wearied, and at times displeased you, the Author has now only to add his thanks and his farewell. He may scarcely ask you to pardon the failures which a greater ability might have shunned, and the errors which a more practised attention might not have incurred;—but forgive him, at least, if at intervals he has paused from recital, to linger too long over reflection—forgive him, if his desire to mingle utility with interest has appeared, to you, too frequent and unveiled; and believe, that if he ever meets you again, he will be neither forgetful of his faults, nor ungrateful for your indulgence.

THE END.

LONDON:
SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.